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HISTO

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BY

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VOLUME II.

The Monarchy. 1461–1540

The Reformation. 1540–1603.

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CONTENTS.

BOOK V.

THE MONARCHY. 1461—1540.

CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER IV.

BOOK VI.

THE REFORMATION. 1540—1603.

CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II.

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BOOK V.

THE MONARCHY.

1461–1540.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK V.

1461—1540.

Edward the Fifth is the subject of a work attributed to Sir Thomas More, and which almost certainly derives much of its importance from Archbishop Morton. Whatever its historical worth may be, it is remarkable in its English form as the first historical work of any literary value which we possess written in our modern prose. The "Letters and Papers of Richard the Third and Henry the Seventh," some "Memorials of Henry the Seventh," including his life by Bernard André of Toulouse, and a volume of "Materials" for a history of his reign have been edited for the Rolls Series. A biography of Henry is among the works of Lord Bacon. The history of Erasmus in England must be followed in his own interesting letters; the most accessible edition of the typical book of the revival, the "Utopia," is the Elizabethan translation, published by Mr Arber. Mr. Lupton has done much to increase our scanty knowledge of Colet by his recent editions of several of his works. Halle's Chronicle extends from the reign of Edward the Fourth to that of Henry the Eighth; for the latter he is copied by Grafton and followed by Holinshed. Cavendish has given a faithful and touching account of Wolsey in his later days, but for any real knowledge of his administration or the foreign policy of Henry the Eighth we must turn from these to the invaluable Calendars of State Papers for this period from the English, Spanish, and Austrian archives, with the prefaces of Professor Brewer and Mr. Bergenroth. Cromwell's early life as told by Foxe is a mass of fable, and the State Papers afford the only real information as to his ministry. For Sir Thomas More we have a touching life by his son-in-law, Roper. The more important documents for the religious history of the time will be found in Mr Pocock's edition of Burnet's "History of the Reformation;" those relating to the dissolution of the monasteries in the collection of letters on that subject published by the Camden Society, and in the "Original Letters" of Sir Henry Ellis. A mass of materials of very various value has been accumulated by Strype in his collections, which commence at this period.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE OF YORK

1461—1485

English freedom.

WITH the victory of Towton the war of the succession came practically to an end Though Margaret still struggled on the northern border and the treachery of Warwick for a while drove the new king from his realm, this gleam of returning fortune only brought a more fatal ruin on the House of Lancaster and seated the House of York more firmly on the throne. But the Wars of the Roses did far more than ruin one royal house or set up another. They found England, in the words of Commines, "among all the world's lordships of which I have knowledge, that where the public weal is best ordered, and where least violence reigns over the people." An English King—the shrewd observer noticed—"can undertake no enterprize of account without assembling his Parliament, which is a thing most wise and holy, and therefore are these kings stronger and better served" than the despotic sovereigns of the Continent. The English kingship, as a judge, Sir John Fortescue, could boast when writing at this time, was not an absolute but a limited monarchy; the land was not a land where the will of the prince was itself the law, but where the prince could neither make laws nor impose taxes save by his subjects' consent. At no time had Parliament played so constant and prominent a part in the government of the realm At no time had the

CHAP I
The House of York.
1461-1485.

principles of constitutional liberty seemed so thoroughly understood and so dear to the people at large. The long Parliamentary contest between the Crown and the two Houses since the days of Edward the First had firmly established the great securities of national liberty—the right of freedom from arbitrary taxation, from arbitrary legislation, from arbitrary imprisonment, and the responsibility of even the highest servants of the Crown to Parliament and to the law.

Results of Wars of Roses.

But with the close of the struggle for the succession this liberty wholly disappeared. If the Wars of the Roses failed in utterly destroying English freedom, they succeeded in arresting its progress for more than a hundred years. With them we enter on an epoch of constitutional retrogression in which the slow work of the age that went before it was rapidly undone From the accession of Edward the Fourth Parliamentary life was almost suspended, or was turned into a mere form by the overpowering influence of the Crown The legislative powers of the two Houses were usurped by the royal Council Arbitrary taxation reappeared in benevolences and forced loans Personal liberty was almost extinguished by a formidable spy-system and by the constant practice of arbitrary imprisonment. Justice was degraded by the prodigal use of bills of attainder, by a wide extension of the judicial power of the royal Council, by the servility of judges, by the coercion of juries So vast and sweeping was the change that to careless observers of a later day the constitutional monarchy of the Edwards and the Henries seemed suddenly to have transformed itself under the Tudors into a despotism as complete as the despotism of the Turk. Such a view is no doubt exaggerated and unjust. Bend and strain the law as he might, there never was a time when the most wilful of English rulers failed to own the restraints of law; and the obedience of the most servile among English subjects lay within bounds, at once political and religious, which no theory of King-

The House of York.

1461-1485.

worship could bring them to overpass. But even if we make these reserves, the character of the monarchy from the days of Edward the Fourth to the days of Elizabeth remains something strange and isolated in our history. It is hard to connect the kingship of the old English, the Norman, the Angevin, or the Plantagenet kings with the kingship of the House of York or of the House of Tudor.

New strength of the Crown.

The primary cause of this great change lay in the recovery of its older strength by the Crown. Through the last hundred and fifty years the monarchy had been hampered by the pressure of the war. Through the last fifty it had been weakened by the insecurity of a disputed succession. It was to obtain supplies for the strife with Scotland and the strife with France that the earlier Plantagenets had been forced to yield to the ever-growing claims which were advanced by the Parliament. It was to win the consent of Parliament to its occupation of the throne and its support against every rival that the House of Lancaster bent yet more humbly to its demands. But with the loss of Guienne the war with France came virtually to an end. The war with Scotland died down into a series of border forays. The Wars of the Roses settled the question of the succession, first by the seeming extinction of the House of Lancaster, and then by the utter ruin of the House of York. The royal treasury was not only relieved from the drain which had left the crown at the mercy of the Third Estate, it was filled as it had never been filled before by the forfeitures and confiscations of the civil war. In the one bill of attainder which followed Towton twelve great nobles and more than a hundred knights and squires were stripped of their estates to the king's profit. Nearly a fifth of the land is said to have passed into the royal possession at one period or other of the civil strife. Edward the Fourth and Henry the Seventh not only possessed a power untrammelled by the difficulties which had beset the Crown since the days of Edward the First, but they

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

were masters of a wealth such as the Crown had never known since the days of Henry the Second. Throughout their reigns these kings showed a firm resolve to shun the two rocks on which the monarchy had been so nearly wrecked. No policy was too inglorious that enabled them to avoid the need of war. The inheritance of a warlike policy, the consciousness of great military abilities, the cry of his own people for a renewal of the struggle, failed to lure Edward from his system of peace. Henry clung to peace in spite of the threatening growth of the French monarchy. he refused to be drawn into any serious war even by its acquisition of Brittany and of a coast-line that ran unbroken along the Channel. Nor was any expedient too degrading if it swelled the royal hoard. Edward by a single stroke, the grant of the customs to the king for life, secured a source of revenue which went far to relieve the Crown from its dependence on Parliament. He stooped to add to the gold which his confiscations amassed by trading on a vast scale; his ships, freighted with tin, wool, and cloth, made the name of the merchant-king famous in the ports of Italy and Greece. Henry was as adroit and as shameless a financier as his predecessor. He was his own treasurer, he kept his own accounts, he ticked off with his own hand the compositions he levied on the western shires for their abortive revolts.

Suspension of Parliamentary life.

With peace and a full treasury the need for calling Parliament together was removed. The collapse of the Houses was in itself a revolution. Up to this moment they had played a more and more prominent part in the government of the realm. The progress made under the earlier Plantagenets had gone as steadily on under Henry the Fourth and his successors. The Commons had continued their advance Not only had the right of self-taxation and of the initiation of laws been explicitly yielded to them, but they had interfered with the administration of the state, had directed the application of subsidies, and called royal ministers to account by repeated

instances of impeachment. Under the first two kings of the House of Lancaster Parliament had been summoned almost every year. Under Henry the Sixth an important step was made in constitutional progress by abandoning the old custom of presenting the requests of Parliament in the form of petitions which were subsequently moulded into statutes by the royal Council. The statute itself in its final shape was now presented for the royal assent and the Crown deprived of all opportunity of modifying it. But with the reign of Edward the Fourth not only this progress but the very action of Parliament comes almost to an end. For the first time since the days of John not a single law which promoted freedom or remedied the abuses of power was even proposed The Houses indeed were only rarely called together by Edward; they were only twice summoned during the last thirteen years of Henry the Seventh. But this discontinuance of Parliamentary life was not due merely to the new financial system of the crown. The policy of the kings was aided by the internal weakness of Parliament itself. No institution suffered more from the civil war. The Houses became mere gatherings of nobles with their retainers and partizans. They were like armed camps to which the great lords came with small armies at their backs. When arms were prohibited the retainers of the warring barons appeared, as in the Club Parliament of 1426, with clubs on their shoulders. When clubs were forbidden they hid stones and balls of lead in their clothes. Amidst scenes such as these the faith in and reverence for Parliaments could hardly fail to die away. But the very success of the House of York was a more fatal blow to the trust in them. It was by the act of the Houses that the Lancastrian line had been raised to the throne. Its title was a Parliamentary title Its existence was in fact a contention that the will of Parliament could override the claims of blood in the succession to the throne. With all this the civil war dealt roughly and decisively. The Parliamentary line was driven from

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

the throne The Parliamentary title was set aside as usurpation. The House of York based its claim to the throne on the incapacity of Parliament to set aside pretensions which were based on sheer nearness of blood. The fall of the House of Lancaster, the accession of the Yorkist Kings, must have seemed to the men who had witnessed the struggle a crushing defeat of the Parliament.

Ruin of Feudal Organization.

Weakened by failure, discredited by faction, no longer needful as a source of supplies, it was easy for the Monarchy to rid itself of the check of the two Houses, and their riddance at once restored the crown to the power it had held under the earlier Kings. But in actual fact Edward the Fourth found himself the possessor of a far greater authority than this. The structure of feudal society fronted a feudal King with two great rival powers in the Baronage and the Church. Even in England, though feudalism had far less hold than elsewhere, the noble and the priest formed effective checks on the monarchy. But at the close of the Wars of the Roses these older checks no longer served as restraints upon the action of the Crown. With the growth of Parliament the weight of the Baronage as a separate constitutional element in the realm, even the separate influence of the Church, had fallen more and more into decay. For their irregular and individual action was gradually substituted the legal and continuous action of the three Estates; and now that the assembly of the estates practically ceased it was too late to revive the older checks which in earlier days had fettered the action of the crown. The kingship of Edward and his successors therefore was not a mere restoration of the kingship of John or of Henry the Second. It was the kingship of those Kings apart from the constitutional forces which in their case stood side by side with kingship, controlling and regulating its action, apart from the force of custom, from the strong arm of the baron, from the religious sanctions which formed so effective a weapon in the hands of the priest, in a word apart from that social organiza-

tion from which our political constitution had sprung Nor was the growth of Parliament the only cause for the weakness of these feudal restraints. The older social order which had prevailed throughout Western Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire was now passing away. The speculation of the twelfth century, the scholastic criticism of the thirteenth, the Lollardry and socialism of the fourteenth century, had at last done their work. The spell of the past, the spell of custom and tradition, which had enchained the minds of men was roughly broken. The supremacy of the warrior in a world of war, the severance of privileged from unprivileged classes, no longer seemed the one natural structure of society The belief in its possession of supernatural truths and supernatural powers no longer held man in unquestioning awe of the priesthood The strength of the Church was sapped alike by theological and moral revolt, while the growth of new classes, the new greed of peace and of the wealth that comes of peace, the advance of industry, the division of property, the progress of centralized government, dealt fatal blows at the feudal organization of the state.

Weakness of the Church.

Nor was the danger merely an external one. Noble and priest alike were beginning to disbelieve in themselves. The new knowledge which was now dawning on the world, the new direct contact with the Greek and Roman literatures which was just beginning to exert its influence on western Europe, told above all on these wealthier and more refined classes. The young scholar or noble who crossed the Alps brought from the schools of Florence the dim impression of a republican liberty or an imperial order which disenchanted him of the world in which he found himself. He looked on the feudalism about him as a brutal anarchy, he looked on the Church itself as the supplanter of a nobler and more philosophic morality. In England as elsewhere the great ecclesiastical body still seemed imposing from the memories of its past, its immense wealth, its tradition of statesmanship, its long

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

association with the intellectual and religious aspirations of men, its hold on social life. But its real power was small. Its moral inertness, its lack of spiritual enthusiasm, gave it less and less hold on the religious minds of the day. Its energies indeed seemed absorbed in a mere clinging to existence. For in spite of steady repression Lollardry still lived on, no longer indeed as an organized movement, but in scattered and secret groups whose sole bond was a common loyalty to the Bible and a common spirit of revolt against the religion of their day. Nine years after the accession of Henry the Sixth the Duke of Gloucester was traversing England with men-at-arms for the purpose of repressing the risings of the Lollards and of hindering the circulation of their invectives against the clergy. In 1449 "Bible men" were still sufficiently formidable to call a prelate to the front as a controversialist: and the very title of Bishop Pecock's work, "A Repressor of overmuch blaming of the clergy," shows the damage done by their virulent criticism. Its most fatal effect was to rob the priesthood of moral power. Taunted with a love of wealth, with a lower standard of life than that of the ploughman and weaver who gathered to read the Bible by night, dreading in themselves any burst of emotion or enthusiasm as a possible prelude to heresy, the clergy ceased to be the moral leaders of the nation. They plunged as deeply as the men about them into the darkest superstition, and above all into the belief in sorcery and magic which formed so remarkable a feature of the time. It was for conspiracy with a priest to waste the King's life by sorcery that Eleanor Cobham did penance through the streets of London. The mist which wrapped the battle-field of Barnet was attributed to the incantations of Friar Bungay. The one pure figure which rises out of the greed, the selfishness, the scepticism of the time, the figure of Joan of Arc, was looked on by the doctors and priests who judged her as that of a sorceress. The prevalence of such beliefs tells its own tale of the intellectual state

of the clergy. They were ceasing in fact to be an intellectual class at all. The monasteries were no longer seats of learning. "I find in them," says Poggio, an Italian scholar who visited England some twenty years after Chaucer's death, "men given up to sensuality in abundance but very few lovers of learning and those of a barbarous sort, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature." The statement is no doubt coloured by the contempt of the new scholars for the scholastic philosophy which had taken the place of letters in England as elsewhere, but even scholasticism was now at its lowest ebb. The erection of colleges, which began in the thirteenth century but made little progress till the time we have reached, failed to arrest the quick decline of the universities both in the numbers and learning of their students. Those at Oxford amounted to only a fifth of the scholars who had attended its lectures a century before, and Oxford Latin became proverbial for a jargon in which the very tradition of grammar had been lost Literature, which had till now rested mainly in the hands of the clergy, came almost to an end. Of all its nobler forms history alone lingered on; but it lingered in compilations or extracts from past writers, such as make up the so-called works of Walsingham, in jejune monastic annals, or worthless popular compendiums. The only real trace of mental activity was seen in the numerous treatises which dealt with alchemy or magic, the elixir of life, or the philosopher's stone; a fungous growth which even more clearly than the absence of healthier letters witnessed to the progress of intellectual decay.

Weakness of the Baronage.

Somewhat of their old independence lingered indeed among the lower clergy and the monastic orders; it was in fact the successful resistance of the last to an effort made to establish arbitrary taxation which brought about their ruin. Up to the terrible statutes of Thomas Cromwell the clergy in convocation still asserted boldly their older rights against the Crown. But it was through its

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

prelates that the Church exercized a directly political influence, and these showed a different temper from the clergy. Driven by sheer need, by the attack of the barons on their temporal possessions and of the Lollard on their spiritual authority, into dependence on the Crown, their weight was thrown into the scale of the monarchy Their weakness told directly on the constitutional progress of the realm, for through the diminution in the number of the peers temporal the greater part of the House of Lords was now composed of spiritual peers, of bishops and the greater abbots The statement which attributes this lessening of the baronage to the Wars of the Roses seems indeed to be an error. Although Henry the Seventh, in dread of opposition to his throne, summoned only a portion of the temporal peers to his first Parliament there were as many barons at his accession as at the accession of Henry the Sixth. Of the greater houses only those of Beaufort and Tiptoft were extinguished by the civil war The decline of the baronage, the extinction of the greater families, the break up of the great estates, had in fact been going on throughout the reign of the Edwards; and it was after Agincourt that the number of temporal peers sank to its lowest ebb. From that time till the time of the Tudors they numbered but fifty-two. A reduction in the numbers of the baronage however might have been more than compensated by the concentration of great estates in the hands of the houses that survived What wrecked it as a military force was the revolution which was taking place in the art of war. The introduction of gunpowder ruined feudalism. The mounted and heavily armed knight gave way to the meaner footman. Fortresses which had been impregnable against the attacks of the Middle Ages crumbled before the new artillery. Although gunpowder had been in use as early as Creçy it was not till the accession of the House of Lancaster that it was really brought into effective employment as a military resource. But the revolution in warfare was immediate. The wars of Henry the Fifth

were wars of sieges. The "Last of the Barons," as Warwick has picturesquely been styled, relied mainly on his train of artillery. It was artillery that turned the day at Barnet and Tewkesbury, and that gave Henry the Seventh his victory over the formidable dangers which assailed him. The strength which the change gave to the crown was in fact almost irresistible. Throughout the Middle Ages the call of a great baron had been enough to raise a formidable revolt. Yeomen and retainers took down the bow from their chimney corner, knights buckled on their armour, and in a few days a host threatened the throne. Without artillery however such a force was now helpless, and the one train of artillery in the kingdom lay at the disposal of the King.

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

The French War and the Baronage.

But a far greater strength than guns could give was given to the monarchy by its maintenance of order and by its policy of peace. For two hundred years England had been almost constantly at war, and to war without had been added discord and mis-rule within. As the country tasted the sweets of rest and firm government that reaction of feeling, that horror of fresh civil wars, that content with its own internal growth and indifference to foreign aggrandizement, which distinguished the epoch of the Tudors began to assert its power. The crown became identified with the thought of national prosperity, almost with the thought of national existence. Loyalty drew to itself the force of patriotism. Devotion to the crown became one in men's minds with devotion to their country. For almost a hundred years England lost all sense of a national individuality; it saw itself only in the Crown. The tendency became irresistible as the nation owned in the power of its Kings its one security for social order, its one bulwark against feudal outrage and popular anarchy. The violence and anarchy which had always clung like a taint to the baronage grew more and more unbearable as the nation moved forward to a more settled peacefulness and industry. But this tendency

to violence received a new impulse from the war with France. Long before the struggle was over it had done its fatal work on the mood of the English noble. His aim had become little more than a lust for gold, a longing after plunder, after the pillage of farms, the sack of cities, the ransom of captives. So intense was the greed of gain that in the later years of the war only a threat of death could keep the fighting-men in their ranks, and the results of victory after victory were lost through the anxiety of the conquerors to deposit their booty and captives safely at home. The moment the hand of such leaders as Henry the Fifth or Bedford was removed the war died down into mere massacre and brigandage. "If God had been a captain now-a-days," exclaimed a French general, "he would have turned marauder." The temper thus nursed on the fields of France found at last scope for action in England itself. Even before the outbreak of the War of the Roses the nobles had become as lawless and dissolute at home as they were greedy and cruel abroad.

Grant of Liveries.

But with the struggle of York and Lancaster and the paralysis of government which it brought with it, all hold over the baronage was gone; and the lawlessness and brutality of their temper showed itself without a check. The disorder which their violence wrought in a single district of the country is brought home by the Paston Letters, an invaluable series of domestic correspondence which lifts for us a corner of the veil that hides the social state of England in the fifteenth century. We see houses sacked, judges overawed or driven from the bench, peaceful men hewn down by assassins or plundered by armed bands, women carried off to forced marriages, elections controlled by brute force, parliaments degraded into camps of armed retainers. As the number of their actual vassals declined with the progress of enfranchisement and the upgrowth of the freeholder, the nobles had found a substitute for them in the grant of their "liveries," the badges of their households, to the smaller

gentry and farmers of their neighbourhood, and this artificial revival of the dying feudalism became one of the curses of the day. The outlaw, the broken soldier returning penniless from the wars, found shelter and wages in the train of the greater barons, and furnished them with a force ready at any moment for violence or civil strife. The same motives which brought the freeman of the tenth century to commend himself to thegn or baron forced the yeoman or smaller gentleman of the fifteenth to don the cognizance of his powerful neighbour, and to ask for a grant of "livery" which would secure him aid and patronage in fray or suit. For to meddle with such a retainer was perilous even for sheriff or judge; and the force which a noble could summon at his call sufficed to overawe a law-court or to drag a culprit from prison or dock. The evils of this system of "maintenance," as it was called, had been felt long before the Wars of the Roses; and statutes both of Edward the First and of Richard the Second had been aimed against it. But it was in the civil war that it showed itself in its full force. The weakness of the crown and the strife of political factions for supremacy left the nobles masters of the field; and the white rose of the House of York, the red rose of the House of Lancaster, the portcullis of the Beauforts, the pied bull of the Nevilles, the bear and ragged staff which Warwick borrowed from the Beauchamps, were seen on hundreds of breasts in Parliament or on the battle-field.

The Social Revolution.

The lawlessness of the baronage tended as it had always tended to the profit of the crown by driving the people at large to seek for order and protection at the hands of the monarchy. And at this moment the craving for such a protection was strengthened by the general growth of wealth and industry. The smaller proprietors of the counties were growing fast both in wealth and numbers, while the burgess class in the cities were drawing fresh riches from the developement of trade which characterized this period. The noble himself owed his

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

importance to his wealth. Poggio, as he wandered through the island, noted that "the noble who has the greatest revenue is most respected; and that even men of gentle blood attend to country business and sell their wool and cattle, not thinking it any disparagement to engage in rural industry." Slowly but surely the foreign commerce of the country, hitherto conducted by the Italian, the Hanse merchant, or the trader of Catalonia or southern Gaul, was passing into English hands. English merchants were settled at Florence and at Venice. English merchant ships appeared in the Baltic. The first faint upgrowth of manufactures was seen in a crowd of protective statutes which formed a marked feature in the legislation of Edward the Fourth. The weight which the industrial classes had acquired was seen in the bounds which their opinion set to the Wars of the Roses. England presented to Philippe de Commines the rare spectacle of a land where, brutal as was its civil strife, "there are no buildings destroyed or demolished by war, and where the mischief of it falls on those who make the war." The ruin and bloodshed were limited in fact to the great lords and their feudal retainers. If the towns once or twice threw themselves, as at Towton, into the struggle, the trading and agricultural classes for the most part stood wholly apart from it. While the baronage was dashing itself to pieces in battle after battle justice went on undisturbed The law courts sate at Westminster. The judges rode on circuit as of old. The system of jury trial took more and more its modern form by the separation of the jurors from the witnesses. But beneath this outer order and prosperity a social revolution was beginning which tended as strongly as the outrages of the baronage to the profit of the crown. The rise in the price of wool was giving a fresh impulse to the changes in agriculture which had begun with the Black Death and were to go steadily on for a hundred years to come. These changes were the throwing together of the smaller holdings, and

CHAP. I.

The House of York.

1461-1485.

the introduction of sheep-farming on an enormous scale. The new wealth of the merchant classes helped on the change. They began to invest largely in land, and these "farming gentlemen and clerking knights," as Latimer bitterly styled them, were restrained by few traditions or associations in their eviction of the smaller tenants. The land indeed had been greatly underlet, and as its value rose with the peace and firm government of the early Tudors the temptation to raise the customary rents became irresistible. "That which went heretofore for twenty or forty pounds a year," we learn in Henry the Eighth's day, "now is let for fifty or a hundred." But it had been only by this low scale of rent that the small yeomanry class had been enabled to exist. "My father," says Latimer, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine; he was able and did find the King a harness with himself and his horse while he came to the place that he should receive the King's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath Field. He kept me to school: he married my sisters with five pounds apiece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor, and all this he did of the same farm, where he that now hath it payeth sixteen pounds by year or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor."

Evictions and Enclosures.

Increase of rent ended with such tenants in the relinquishment of their holdings, but the bitterness of the ejections which the new system of cultivation necessitated was increased by the iniquitous means that were often employed to bring them about. The farmers, if we believe More in 1515, were "got rid of either by fraud or force, or tired out with repeated wrongs into parting with their

property." "In this way it comes to pass that these poor wretches, men, women, husbands, orphans, widows, parents with little children, households greater in number than in wealth (for arable farming requires many hands, while one shepherd and herdsman will suffice for a pasture farm), all these emigrate from their native fields without knowing where to go" The sale of their scanty household stuff drove them to wander homeless abroad, to be thrown into prison as vagabonds, to beg and to steal. Yet in the face of such a spectacle as this we still find the old complaint of scarcity of labour, and the old legal remedy for it in a fixed scale of wages. The social disorder, in fact, baffled the sagacity of English statesmen, and they could find no better remedy for it than laws against the further extension of sheep-farms, and a formidable increase of public executions. Both were alike fruitless. Enclosures and evictions went on as before and swelled the numbers and the turbulence of the floating labour class The riots against "enclosures," of which we first hear in the time of Henry the Sixth and which became a constant feature of the Tudor period, are indications not only of a perpetual strife going on in every quarter between the landowners and the smaller peasant class, but of a mass of social discontent which was to seek constant outlets in violence and revolution. And into this mass of disorder the break-up of the military households and the return of wounded and disabled soldiers from the wars introduced a dangerous leaven of outrage and crime. England for the first time saw a distinct criminal class in the organized gangs of robbers which began to infest the roads and were always ready to gather round the standard of revolt. The gallows did their work in vain. "If you do not remedy the evils which produce thieves," More urged with bitter truth, "the rigorous execution of justice in punishing thieves will be vain." But even More could only suggest a remedy which, efficacious as it was subsequently to prove, had yet to wait a century for its realization. "Let the woollen manufacture be intro-

duced, so that honest employment may be found for those whom want has made thieves or will make thieves ere long." The extension of industry at last succeeded in absorbing this mass of surplus labour, but the process was not complete till the close of Elizabeth's day, and throughout the time of the Tudors the discontent of the labour class bound the wealthier classes to the crown. It was in truth this social danger which lay at the root of the Tudor despotism. For the proprietary classes the repression of the poor was a question of life and death. Employer and proprietor were ready to surrender freedom into the hands of the one power which could preserve them from social anarchy. It was to the selfish panic of the landowners that England owed the Statute of Labourers and its terrible heritage of pauperism. It was to the selfish panic of both landowner and merchant that she owed the despotism of the Monarchy.

Restriction of Borough freedom.

The most fatal effect of this panic, of this passion for "order," was seen in the striving of these classes after special privileges which the crown alone could bestow. Even before the outbreak of the civil war this tendency towards privilege had produced important constitutional results. The character of the House of Commons had been changed by the restriction of both the borough and the county franchise. Up to this time all freemen settling in a borough and paying their dues to it became by the mere fact of settlement its burgesses. But during the reign of Henry the Sixth and still more under Edward the Fourth this largeness of borough life was roughly curtailed. The trade companies which vindicated civic freedom from the tyranny of the older merchant gilds themselves tended to become a narrow and exclusive oligarchy. Most of the boroughs had by this time acquired civic property, and it was with the aim of securing their own enjoyment of this against any share of it by "strangers" that the existing burgesses for the most part procured charters of incorporation from the Crown,

which turned them into a close body and excluded from their number all who were not burgesses by birth or who failed henceforth to purchase their right of entrance by a long apprenticeship. In addition to this narrowing of the burgess-body the internal government of the boroughs had almost universally passed since the failure of the Communal movement in the thirteenth century from the free gathering of the citizens in borough-mote into the hands of Common Councils, either self-elected or elected by the wealthier burgesses; and to these councils, or to a yet more restricted number of "select men" belonging to them, clauses in the new charters generally confined the right of choosing their representatives in Parliament. It was with this restriction that the long process of degradation began which ended in reducing the representation of our boroughs to a mere mockery. Influences which would have had small weight over the town at large proved irresistible by the small body of corporators or "select men." Great nobles, neighbouring landowners, the Crown itself, seized on the boroughs as their prey, and dictated the choice of their representatives. Corruption did whatever force failed to do: and from the Wars of the Roses to the days of Pitt the voice of the people had to be looked for not in the members for the towns but in the knights for the counties.

Restriction of County Franchise

The restriction of the county franchise on the other hand was the direct work of the Parliament itself. Economic changes were fast widening the franchise in the shires. The number of freeholders increased with the subdivision of estates and the social changes which we have already noticed. But this increase of independence was marked by "riots and divisions between the gentlemen and other people" which the statesmen of the day attributed to the excessive number of voters. In many counties the power of the great lords undoubtedly enabled them to control elections through the number of their retainers. In Cade's revolt the Kentishmen

complained that "the people of the shire are not allowed to have their free elections in the choosing of knights for the shire, but letters have been sent from divers estates to the great nobles of the county, the which enforceth their tenants and other people by force to choose other persons than the common will is." It was primarily to check this abuse that a statute of the reign of Henry the Sixth restricted in 1430 the right of voting in shires to freeholders holding land worth forty shillings, a sum equal in our money to at least twenty pounds a year and representing a far higher proportional income at the present time. Whatever its original purpose may have been, the result of the statute was a wide disfranchisement. It was aimed, in its own words, against voters "of no value, whereof every of them pretended to have a voice equivalent with the more worthy knights and esquires dwelling in the same counties." But in actual working the statute was interpreted in a more destructive fashion than its words were intended to convey. Up to this time all suitors who attended at the Sheriff's Court had voted without question for the Knight of the Shire, but by the new statute the great bulk of the existing voters, every leaseholder and every copyholder, found themselves implicitly deprived of their franchise.

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

The Nevilles.

The restriction of the suffrage was the main cause that broke the growing strength of the House of Commons. The ruin of the baronage, the weakness of the prelacy, broke that of the House of Lords. The power of the Parliament died down therefore at the very moment when the cessation of war, the opening of new sources of revenue, the cry for protection against social anarchy, doubled the strength of the Crown. A change passed over the spirit of English government which was little short of a revolution. The change however was a slow and gradual one. It is with the victory of Towton that the new power of the Monarchy begins, but in the years that immediately followed this victory there was little

CHAP I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

to promise the triumph of the Crown. The King, Edward the Fourth, was but a boy of nineteen; and decisive as his march upon London proved, he had as yet given few signs of political ability. His luxurious temper showed itself in the pomp and gaiety of his court, in feast and tourney, or in love-passages with city wives and noble ladies. The work of government, the defence of the new throne against its restless foes, he left as yet to sterner hands Among the few great houses who recalled the might of the older baronage two families of the northern border stood first in power and repute. The Percies had played the chief part in the revolution which gave the crown to the House of Lancaster. Their rivals, the Nevilles, had set the line of York on the throne. Fortune seemed to delight in adding lands and wealth to the last powerful family. The heiress of the Montacutes brought the Earldom of Salisbury and the barony of Monthermer to a second son of their chief, the Earl of Westmoreland; and Salisbury's son, Richard Neville, won the Earldom of Warwick with the hand of the heiress of the Beauchamps. The ruin of the Percies, whose lands and Earldom of Northumberland were granted to Warwick's brother, raised the Nevilles to unrivalled greatness in the land Warwick, who on his father's death added the Earldom of Salisbury to his earlier titles, had like his father warmly espoused the cause of Richard of York, and it was to his counsels that men ascribed the decisive step by which his cousin Edward of March assumed the crown. From St. Albans to Towton he had been the foremost among the assailants of the Lancastrian line; and the death of his uncle and father, the youth of the King, and the glory of the great victory which confirmed his throne, placed the Earl at the head of the Yorkist party.

Warwick.

Warwick's services were munificently rewarded by a grant of vast estates from the confiscated lands of the Lancastrian baronage, and by his elevation to the highest posts in the service of the State. He was Captain of

Calais, admiral of the fleet in the Channel, and Warden of the Western Marches. The command of the northern border lay in the hands of his brother, Lord Montagu, who received as his share of the spoil the forfeited Earldom of Northumberland and the estates of his hereditary rivals, the Percies. A younger brother, George Neville, was raised to the See of York and the post of Lord Chancellor. Lesser rewards fell to Warwick's uncles, the minor chiefs of the House of Neville, Lords Falconberg, Abergavenny, and Latimer. The vast power which such an accumulation of wealth and honours placed at the Earl's disposal was wielded with consummate ability. In outer seeming Warwick was the very type of the feudal baron. He could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms. Six hundred liveried retainers followed him to Parliament. Thousands of dependants feasted in his court-yard. But few men were really further from the feudal ideal. Active and ruthless warrior as he was, his enemies denied to the Earl the gift of personal daring. In war he showed himself more general than soldier, and in spite of a series of victories his genius was not so much military as diplomatic. A Burgundian chronicler who knew him well describes him as the craftiest man of his day, "le plus soubtil homme de son vivant." Secret, patient, without faith or loyalty, ruthless, unscrupulous, what Warwick excelled in was intrigue, treachery, the contrivance of plots, and sudden desertions.

His temper brought out in terrible relief the moral disorganization of the time. The old order of the world was passing away. Since the fall of the Roman Empire civil society had been held together by the power of the given word, by the "fealty" and "loyalty" that bound vassal to lord and lord to king. A common faith in its possession of supernatural truths and supernatural powers had bound men together in the religious society which knew itself as the Church. But the spell of religious belief was now broken and the feudal conception

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

of society was passing away On the other hand the individual sense of personal duty, the political consciousness of each citizen that national order and national welfare are essential to his own well-being, had not yet come The bonds which had held the world together through so many ages loosened and broke only to leave man face to face with his own selfishness The motives that sway and ennoble the common conduct of men were powerless over the ruling classes. Pope and king, bishop and noble, vied with each other in greed, in self-seeking, in lust, in faithlessness, in a pitiless cruelty. It is this moral degradation that flings so dark a shade over the Wars of the Roses. From no period in our annals do we turn with such weariness and disgust. Their savage battles, their ruthless executions, their shameless treasons, seem all the more terrible from the pure selfishness of the ends for which men fought, for the utter want of all nobleness and chivalry in the contest itself, of all great result in its close. And it is this moral disorganization that expresses itself in the men whom the civil war left behind it. Of honour, of loyalty, of good faith, Warwick knew nothing He had fought for the House of Neville rather than for the House of York, had set Edward on the throne as a puppet whom he could rule at his will, and his policy seemed to have gained its end in leaving the Earl master of the realm.

Edward the Fourth.

In the three years which followed Towton the power of the Nevilles overshadowed that of the King. It was Warwick who crushed a new rising which Margaret brought about by a landing in the north, and who drove the queen and her child over the Scotch border. It was his brother, Lord Montagu, who suppressed a new revolt in 1464 The defeat of this rising in the battle of Hexham seemed to bring the miserable war to a close, for after some helpless wanderings Henry the Sixth was betrayed into the hands of his enemies and brought in triumph to London. His feet were tied to the stirrups, he was led thrice round the pillory, and then sent as a prisoner to the Tower.

Warwick was now all-powerful in the state, but the cessation of the war was the signal for a silent strife between the Earl and his young sovereign. In Edward indeed Warwick was to meet not only a consummate general but a politician whose subtlety and rapidity of conception were far above his own. As a mere boy Edward had shown himself among the ablest and the most pitiless of the warriors of the civil war. He had looked on with cool ruthlessness while grey-haired nobles were hurried to the block. The terrible bloodshed of Towton woke no pity in his heart, he turned from it only to frame a vast bill of attainder which drove twelve great nobles and a hundred knights to beggary and exile. When treachery placed his harmless rival in his power he visited him with cruel insult. His military ability had been displayed in his rapid march upon London, the fierce blow which freed him from his enemy in the rear, the decisive victory at Towton. But his political ability was slower in developing itself. In his earliest years he showed little taste for the work of rule. While Warwick was winning triumphs on battle-field after battle-field, the young King seemed to abandon himself to a voluptuous indolence, to revels with the city wives of London, and to the caresses of mistresses like Jane Shore. Tall in stature and of singular beauty, his winning manners and gay carelessness of bearing secured Edward a popularity which had been denied to nobler kings. When he asked a rich old lady for ten pounds towards a war with France, she answered, "For thy comely face thou shalt have twenty." The King thanked and kissed her, and the old woman made her twenty forty. In outer appearance indeed no one could contrast more utterly with the subtle sovereigns of his time, with the mean-visaged Lewis of France or the meanly-clad Ferdinand of Aragon. But Edward's work was the same as theirs and it was done as completely. While jesting with aldermen, or dallying with mistresses, or idling over new pages from the printing press at

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

Westminster, Edward was silently laying the foundations of an absolute rule.

The very faults of his nature helped him to success. His pleasure-loving and self-indulgent temper needed the pressure of emergency, of actual danger, to flash out into action. Men like Commines who saw him only in moments of security and indolence scorned Edward as dull, sensual, easy to be led and gulled by keener wits. It was in the hour of need and despair that his genius showed itself, cool, rapid, subtle, utterly fearless, moving straight to its aim through clouds of treachery and intrigue, and striking hard when its aim was reached. But even in his idler hours his purpose never wavered. His indolence and gaiety were in fact mere veils thrown over a will of steel. From the first his aim was to free the Crown from the control of the baronage He made no secret of his hostility to the nobles. At Towton as in all his after battles he bade his followers slay knight and baron, but spare the commons In his earliest Parliament, that of 1461, he renewed the statutes against giving of liveries, and though this enactment proved as fruitless as its predecessors to reduce the households of the baronage it marked Edward's resolve to adhere to the invariable policy of the Crown in striving for their reduction. But efforts like these, though they indicated the young King's policy, could produce little effect so long as the mightiest of the barons overawed the throne Yet even a king as bold as Edward might well have shrunk from a struggle with Warwick. The Earl was all powerful in the state; the military resources of the realm were in his hands. As captain of Calais he was master of the one disciplined force at the disposal of the Crown, and as admiral he controlled the royal fleet. The strength he drew from his wide possessions, from his vast wealth (for his official revenues alone were estimated at eighty thousand crowns a year), from his warlike renown and his wide kinship, was backed by his personal popularity. Above all the Yorkist party, bound

to Warwick by a long series of victories, looked on him rather than on the young and untried King as its head. Even Edward was forced to delay any break with the Earl till the desperate struggle of Margaret was over. It was only after her defeat at Hexham and the capture of Henry that the King saw himself free for a strife with the great soldier who overawed the throne.

Lewis the Eleventh.

The policy of Warwick pointed to a close alliance with France. The Hundred Years' War, though it had driven the English from Guienne and the south, had left the French Monarchy hemmed in by great feudatories on every other border. Brittany was almost independent in the west. On the east the house of Anjou lay, restless and ambitious, in Lorraine and Provence, while the house of Burgundy occupied its hereditary duchy and Franche Comté. On the northern frontier the same Burgundian house was massing together into a single state nearly all the crowd of counties, marquisates, and dukedoms which now make up Holland and Belgium. Nobles hardly less powerful or more dependent on the Crown held the central provinces of the kingdom when Lewis the Eleventh mounted its throne but a few months after Edward's accession. The temper of the French King drove him to a strife for the mastery of his realm, and his efforts after centralization and a more effective rule soon goaded the baronage into a mood of revolt. But Lewis saw well that a struggle with it was only possible if England stood aloof. His father's cool sagacity had planned the securing of his conquests by the marriage of Lewis himself to an English wife, and though this project had fallen through, and the civil wars had given safety to France to the end of Charles's reign, the ruin of the Lancastrian cause at Towton again roused the danger of attack from England at the moment when Lewis mounted the throne. Its young and warlike King, the great baron who was still fresh from the glory of Towton, might well resolve to win back the heritage of Eleanor, that Duchy of Guienne which had been lost but

some ten years before. Even if such an effort proved fruitless, Lewis saw that an English war would not only ruin his plans for the overthrow of the nobles, but would leave him more than ever at their mercy. Above all it would throw him helplessly into the hands of the Burgundian Duke. In the new struggle as in the old the friendship of Burgundy could alone bring a favourable issue, and such a friendship would have to be paid for by sacrifices even more terrible than those which had been wrenched from the need of Charles the Seventh. The passing of Burgundy from the side of England to the side of France after the Treaty of Arras had been bought by the cession to its Duke of the towns along the Somme, of that Picardy which brought the Burgundian frontier to some fifty miles from Paris. Sacrifices even more costly would have to buy the aid of Burgundy in a struggle with Edward the Fourth

The Triple Alliance

How vivid was his sense of these dangers was seen in the eagerness of Lewis to get the truce with England renewed and extended. But his efforts for a general peace broke down before the demands of the English council for the restoration of Normandy and Guienne Nor were his difficulties from England alone. An English alliance was unpopular in France itself "Seek no friendship from the English, Sire!" said Pierre de Brezé, the Seneschal of Normandy, "for the more they love you, the more all Frenchmen will hate you!" All Lewis could do was to fetter Edward's action by giving him work at home. When Margaret appealed to him for aid after Towton he refused any formal help, but her pledge to surrender Calais in case of success drew from him some succour in money and men which enabled the Queen to renew the struggle in the north Though her effort failed, the hint so roughly given had been enough to change the mood of the English statesmen; the truce with France was renewed, and a different reception met the new proposals of alliance which followed it. Lewis indeed was now busy with an even more pressing danger. In any struggle of the King with England

or the nobles what gave Burgundy its chief weight was the possession of the towns on the Somme, and it was his consciousness of the vital importance of these to his throne that spurred Lewis to the bold and dexterous diplomacy by which Duke Philip the Good, under the influence of counsellors who looked to the French King for protection against the Duke's son, Charles of Charolais, was brought to surrender Picardy on payment of the sum stipulated for its ransom in the Treaty of Arras. The formal surrender of the towns on the Somme took place in October 1463, but they were hardly his own when Lewis turned to press his alliance upon England. From Picardy, where he was busy in securing his newly-won possessions, he sought an interview with Warwick. His danger indeed was still great; for the irritated nobles were already drawing together into a League of the Public Weal, and Charles of Charolais, indignant at the counsellors who severed him from his father and at the King who traded through them on the Duke's dotage, was eager to place himself at its head. But these councillors, the Croys, saw their own ruin as well as the ruin of Lewis in the success of a league of which Charles was the head; and at their instigation Duke Philip busied himself at the opening of 1464 as the mediator of an alliance which would secure Lewis against it, a triple alliance between Burgundy and the French and English Kings.

Warwick's Policy.

Such an alliance had now become Warwick's settled policy. In it lay the certainty of peace at home as abroad, the assurance of security to the throne which he had built up. While Margaret of Anjou could look for aid from France the house of York could hope for no cessation of the civil war. A union between France, Burgundy, and England left the partizans of Lancaster without hope. When Lewis therefore summoned him to an interview on the Somme, Warwick, though unable to quit England in face of the dangers which still threatened from the north, promised to send his brother the Chancellor to conduct a

CHAP. I. — The House of York. — 1461-1485.

negotiation. Whether the mission took place or no, the questions not only of peace with France but of a marriage between Edward and one of the French King's kinswomen were discussed in the English Council as early as the spring of 1464, for in the May of that year, at a moment when Warwick was hurrying to the north to crush Margaret's last effort in the battle of Hexham, a Burgundian agent announced to the Croys that an English embassy would be despatched to St Omer on the coming St. John's day to confer with Lewis and Duke Philip on the peace and the marriage-treaty. The victory of Hexham and the capture of Henry, successes which were accepted by foreign powers as a final settlement of the civil strife, and which left Edward's hands free as they had never been free before, quickened the anxiety of Lewis, who felt every day the toils of the great confederacy of the French princes closing more tightly round him. But Margaret was still in his hands, and Warwick remained firm in his policy of alliance. At Michaelmas the Earl prepared to cross the sea for the meeting at St Omer

Edward's Marriage

It was this moment that Edward chose for a sudden and decisive blow. Only six days before the departure of the embassy the young King informed his Council that he was already wedded By a second match with a Kentish knight, Sir Richard Woodville, Jacquetta of Luxemburg, the widow of the Regent Duke of Bedford, had become the mother of a daughter Elizabeth. Elizabeth married Sir John Grey, a Lancastrian partizan, but his fall some few years back in the second battle of St. Alban's left her a widow, and she caught the young King's fancy. At the opening of May, at the moment when Warwick's purpose to conclude the marriage-treaty was announced to the court of Burgundy, Edward had secretly made her his wife He had reserved, however, the announcement of his marriage till the very eve of the negotiations, when its disclosure served not only to shatter Warwick's plans but to strike a sudden and decisive blow at the sway he had wielded till now in the

royal Council. The blow in fact was so sudden and unexpected that Warwick could only take refuge in a feigned submission. "The King," wrote one of his partizans, Lord Wenlock, to the Court of Burgundy, "has taken a wife at his pleasure, without knowledge of them whom he ought to have called to counsel him; by reason of which it is highly displeasing to many great lords and to the bulk of his Council But since the marriage has gone so far that it cannot be helped, we must take patience in spite of ourselves." Not only did the negotiations with France come to an end, but the Earl found himself cut off from the King's counsels. "As one knows not," wrote his adherent, "seeing the marriage is made in this way, what purpose the King may have to go on with the other two points, truce or peace, the opinion of the Council is that my Lord of Warwick will not pass the sea till one learns the King's will and pleasure on that point." Even Warwick indeed might have paused before the new aspect of affairs across the Channel. For at this moment the growing weakness of Duke Philip enabled Charles of Charolais to overthrow the Croys, and to become the virtual ruler of the Burgundian states. At the close of 1464 the League of the Public Weal drew fast to a head, and Charles despatched the Chancellor of Burgundy to secure the aid of England. But the English Council met the advances of the League with coldness Edward himself could have seen little save danger to his throne from its triumph Count Charles, proud of his connexion with the House of Lancaster through his Portuguese mother, a descendant of John of Gaunt, was known to be hostile to the Yorkist throne The foremost of his colleagues, John of Calabria, was a son of René of Anjou and a brother of Margaret. Another of the conspirators, the Count of Maine, was Margaret's uncle. It was significant that the Duke of Somerset had found a place in the train of Charles of Charolais. On the other hand the warmest advocates of the French alliance could hardly press for closer relations

CHAP. I. — The House of York. — 1461-1485. —

with a King whose ruin seemed certain, and even Warwick must have been held back by the utter collapse of the royal power when the League attacked Lewis in 1465. Deserted by every great noble, and cooped up within the walls of Paris, the French King could only save himself by a humiliating submission to the demands of the Leaguers.

The Woodvilles

The close of the struggle justified Edward's policy of inaction, for the terms of the peace told strongly for English interests The restoration of the towns on the Somme to Burgundy, the cession of Normandy to the King's brother, Francis, the hostility of Brittany, not only detached the whole western coast from the hold of Lewis, but forced its possessors to look for aid to the English King who lay in their rear. But Edward had little time to enjoy this piece of good luck. No sooner had the army of the League broken up than its work was undone. The restless genius of Lewis detached prince from prince, won over the houses of Brittany and Anjou to friendship, snatched back Normandy in January 1466, and gathered an army in Picardy to meet attack either from England or Count Charles From neither however was any serious danger to be feared. Charles was held at home till the close of the year by revolts at Liége and Dinant, while a war of factions within Edward's court distracted the energies of England. The young King had rapidly followed up the blow of his marriage by raising his wife's family to a greatness which was meant to balance that of the Nevilles. The Queen's father, Lord Rivers, was made treasurer and constable, her brothers and sisters were matched with great nobles and heiresses; the heiress of the Duke of Exeter, Edward's niece, whose hand Warwick sought for his brother's son, was betrothed to Elizabeth's son by her former marriage. The King's confidence was given to his new kinsmen, and Warwick saw himself checked even at the council-board by the influence of the Woodvilles. Still true to an alliance with France, he was met by their advocacy of an

alliance with Burgundy where Charles of Charolais through his father's sickness and age was now supreme. Both powers were equally eager for English aid. Lewis despatched an envoy to prolong the truce from his camp on the Somme, and proposed to renew negotiations for a marriage treaty by seeking the hand of Edward's sister, Margaret, for a French prince. Though "the thing which Charles hated most," as Commines tells us, "was the house of York," the stress of politics drew him as irresistibly to Edward. His wife, Isabella of Bourbon, had died during the war of the League, and much as such a union was "against his heart," the activity of Lewis forced him at the close of 1466 to seek to buy English aid by demanding Margaret's hand in marriage.

The two alliances.

It is from this moment that the two great lines of our foreign policy become settled and defined In drawing together the states of the Low Countries into a single political body, the Burgundian Dukes had built up a power which has ever since served as a barrier against the advance of France to the north or its mastery of the Rhine. To maintain this power, whether in the hands of the Dukes or their successors, the Spaniard or the Emperor, has always been a foremost object of English statesmanship; and the Burgundian alliance in its earlier or later shapes has been the constant rival of the alliance with France. At this moment indeed the attitude of Burgundy was one rather of attack than of defence. If Charles did not aim at the direct conquest of France, he looked to such a weakening of it as would prevent Lewis from hindering the great plan on which he had set his heart, the plan of uniting his scattered dominions on the northern and eastern frontier of his rival by the annexation of Lorraine, and of raising them into a great European power by extending his dominion along the whole course of the Rhine. His policy was still to strengthen the great feudatories against the Crown. "I love France so much," he laughed, "that I had rather it had six kings than one;"

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

and weak as the league of the Public Weal had proved he was already trying to build up a new confederacy against Lewis. In this confederacy he strove that England should take part. Throughout 1466 the English court was the field for a diplomatic struggle between Charles and Lewis. Warwick pressed Margaret's marriage with one of the French princes. The marriage with Charles was backed by the Woodvilles. Edward bore himself between the two parties with matchless perfidy. Apparently yielding to the counsels of the Earl, he despatched him in 1467 to treat for peace with Lewis at Rouen. Warwick was received with honours which marked the importance of his mission in the French King's eyes. Bishops and clergy went out to meet him, his attendants received gifts of velvet robes and the rich stuffs of Rouen, and for twelve days the Earl and Lewis were seen busy in secret conference. But while the Earl was busy with the French King the Great Bastard of Burgundy crossed to England, and a sumptuous tourney, in which he figured with one of the Woodvilles, hardly veiled the progress of counter negotiations between Charles and Edward himself. The young King seized on the honours paid to Warwick as the pretext for an outburst of jealousy. The seals were suddenly taken from his brother, the Archbishop of York, and when the Earl himself returned with a draft-treaty stipulating a pension from France and a reference of the English claims on Normandy and Guienne to the Pope's decision Edward listened coldly and disavowed his envoy.

The overthrow of Warwick.

Bitter reproaches on his intrigues with the French King marked even more vividly the close of Warwick's power. He withdrew from court to his castle of Middleham, while the conclusion of a marriage-treaty between Charles and Margaret proved the triumph of his rivals. The death of his father in the summer of 1467 raised Charles to the Dukedom of Burgundy, and his diplomatic success in England was followed by preparations for a new

struggle with the French King. In 1468 a formal league bound England, Burgundy, and Brittany together against Lewis. While Charles gathered an army in Picardy Edward bound himself to throw a body of troops into the strong places of Normandy which were held by the Breton Duke, and six thousand mounted archers under the Queen's brother, Anthony, Lord Scales, were held ready to cross the Channel. Parliament was called together in May, and the announcement of the Burgundian alliance and of the King's purpose to recover his heritage over sea was met by a large grant of supplies from the Commons. In June the pompous marriage of Margaret with the Burgundian Duke set its seal on Edward's policy. How strongly the current of national feeling ran in its favour was seen in Warwick's humiliation. The Earl was helpless. The King's dexterous use of his conference with Lewis and of the honours he had received from him gave him the colour of a false Englishman and of a friend to France. The Earl lost power over the Yorkists The war party, who formed the bulk of it, went hotly with the King, the merchants, who were its most powerful support, leaned to a close connexion with the master of Flanders and the Lower Rhine. The danger of his position drove Warwick further and further from his old standing ground; he clung for aid to Lewis; he became the French king's pensioner and dependent. At the French court he was looked upon already as a partizan of the House of Lancaster. Edward dexterously seized on the rumour to cut him off more completely from his old party. He called on him to confront his accusers, and though Warwick purged himself of the charge, the stigma remained. The victor of Towton was no longer counted as a good Yorkist. But triumphant as he was, Edward had no mind to drive the Earl into revolt, nor was Warwick ready for revenge. The two subtle enemies drew together again. The Earl appeared at court, he was formally reconciled both to the King and to the Woodvilles; as though to announce his conversion to the

CHAP. I. — The House of York — 1461-1485.

Burgundian alliance he rode before the new Duchess Margaret on her way to the sea His submission removed the last obstacle to the King's action, and Edward declared his purpose to take the field in person against the King of France

The Marriage of Clarence

But at the moment when the danger seemed greatest the quick, hard blows of Lewis paralyzed the League. He called Margaret from Bar to Harfleur, where Jasper Tudor, the Earl of Pembroke, prepared to cross with a small force of French soldiers into Wales The dread of a Lancastrian rising should Margaret land in England hindered Lord Scales from crossing the sea; and marking the slowness with which the Burgundian troops gathered in Picardy Lewis flung himself in September on the Breton Duke, reduced him to submission, and exacted the surrender of the Norman towns which offered an entry for the English troops. His eagerness to complete his work by persuading Charles to recognize his failure in a personal interview threw him into the Duke's hands; and though he was released at the end of the year it was only on humiliating terms. But the danger from the triple alliance was over, he had bought a fresh peace with Burgundy, and Edward's hopes of French conquest were utterly foiled We can hardly doubt that this failure told on the startling revolution which marked the following year Master of Calais, wealthy, powerful as he was, Warwick had shown by his feigned submission his sense that single-handed he was no match for the King. In detaching from him the confidence of the Yorkist party which had regarded him as its head, Edward had robbed him of his strength. But the King was far from having won the Yorkist party to himself. His marriage with the widow of a slain Lancastrian, his promotion of a Lancastrian family to the highest honours, estranged him from the men who had fought his way to the Crown. Warwick saw that the Yorkists could still be rallied round the elder of Edward's brothers, the Duke

of Clarence; and the temper of Clarence, weak and greedy of power, hating the Woodvilles, looking on himself as heir to the crown yet dreading the claims of Edward's daughter Elizabeth, lent itself to his arts. The spring of 1469 was spent in intrigues to win over Clarence by offering him the hand of Warwick's elder daughter and co-heiress, and in preparations for a rising in Lancashire So secretly were these conducted that Edward was utterly taken by surprize when Clarence and the Earl met in July at Calais and the marriage of the Duke proved the signal for a rising at home

Warwick's failure.

The revolt turned out a formidable one. The first force sent against it was cut to pieces at Edgecote near Banbury, and its leaders, Earl Rivers and one of the queen's brothers, taken and beheaded. Edward was hurrying to the support of this advanced body when it was defeated; but on the news his force melted away and he was driven to fall back upon London. Galled as he had been by his brother's marriage, he saw nothing in it save the greed of Clarence for the Earl's heritage, and it was with little distrust that he summoned Warwick with the trained troops who formed the garrison of Calais to his aid The Duke and Earl at once crossed the Channel Gathering troops as they moved, they joined Edward near Oxford, and the end of their plot was at last revealed. No sooner had the armies united than Edward found himself virtually a prisoner in Warwick's hands. But the bold scheme broke down. The Yorkist nobles demanded the King's liberation. London called for it. The Duke of Burgundy "practised secretly," says Commines, "that King Edward might escape," and threatened to break off all trade with Flanders if he were not freed. Warwick could look for support only to the Lancastrians, but the Lancastrians demanded Henry's restoration as the price of their aid. Such a demand was fatal to the plan for placing Clarence on the throne, and Warwick was thrown back on a formal reconciliation with the King. Edward was

CHAP. I. — The House of York. — 1461-1485.

freed, and Duke and Earl withdrew to their estates for the winter. But the impulse which Warwick had given to his adherents brought about a new rising in the spring of 1470. A force gathered in Lincolnshire under Sir Robert Welles with the avowed purpose of setting Clarence on the throne, and Warwick and the Duke though summoned to Edward's camp on pain of being held for traitors remained sullenly aloof. The King however was now ready for the strife. A rapid march to the north ended in the rout of the insurgents, and Edward turned on the instigators of the rising. But Clarence and the Earl could gather no force to meet him. Yorkist and Lancastrian alike held aloof, and they were driven to flight. Calais, though held by Warwick's deputy, repulsed them from its walls, and the Earl's fleet was forced to take refuge in the harbours of France.

Warwick in France

The long struggle seemed at last over. In subtlety as in warlike daring the young King had proved himself more than a match for the "subtlest man of men now living." He had driven him to throw himself on "our adversary of France." Warwick's hold over the Yorkists was all but gone. His own brothers, the Earl of Northumberland and the Archbishop of York, were with the King, and Edward counted on the first as a firm friend. Warwick had lost Calais. Though he still retained his fleet he was forced to support it by making prizes of Flemish ships, and this involved him in fresh difficulties. The Duke of Burgundy made the reception of these ships in French harbours the pretext for a new strife with Lewis; he seized the goods of French merchants at Bruges and demanded redress. Lewis was in no humour for risking for so small a matter the peace he had won, and refused to see or speak with Warwick till the prizes were restored. But he was soon driven from this neutral position. The violent language of Duke Charles showed his desire to renew the war with France in the faith that Warwick's presence at the French court would ensure

Edward's support; and Lewis resolved to prevent such a war by giving Edward work to do at home. He supplied Warwick with money and men, and pressed him to hasten his departure for England. "You know," he wrote to an agent, "the desire I have for Warwick's return to England, as well because I wish to see him get the better of his enemies as that at least through him the realm of England may be again thrown into confusion, so as to avoid the questions which have arisen out of his residence here." But Warwick was too cautious a statesman to hope to win England with French troops only. His hopes of Yorkist aid were over with the failure of Clarence; and, covered as he was with Lancastrian blood, he turned to the House of Lancaster. Margaret was summoned to French court; the mediation of Lewis bent her proud spirit to a reconciliation on Warwick's promise to restore her husband to the throne, and after a fortnight's struggle she consented at the close of July to betroth her son to the earl's second daughter, Anne Neville. Such an alliance shielded Warwick, as he trusted, from Lancastrian vengeance, but it at once detached Clarence from his cause. Edward had already made secret overtures to his brother, and though Warwick strove to reconcile the Duke to his new policy by a provision that in default of heirs to the son of Margaret Clarence should inherit the throne, the Duke's resentment drew him back to his brother's side. But whether by Edward's counsel or no his resentment was concealed; Clarence swore fealty to the house of Lancaster, and joined in the preparations which Warwick was making for a landing in England.

CHAP. I. — The House of York. — 1461–1485.

Edward driven out.

What the Earl really counted on was not so much Lancastrian aid as Yorkist treason. Edward reckoned on the loyalty of Warwick's brothers, the Archbishop of York and Lord Montagu. The last indeed he "loved," and Montagu's firm allegiance during his brother's defection seemed to justify his confidence in him. But in his desire to redress some of the wrongs of the civil war Edward

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

had utterly estranged the Nevilles. In 1469 he released Henry Percy from the Tower, and restored to him the title and estates of his father, the attainted Earl of Northumberland. Montagu had possessed both as his share of the Yorkist spoil, and though Edward made him a marquis in amends he had ever since nursed plans of revenge. From after events it is clear that he had already pledged himself to betray the King. But his treachery was veiled with consummate art, and in spite of repeated warnings from Burgundy Edward remained unconcerned at the threats of invasion. Of the Yorkist party he held himself secure since Warwick's desertion of their cause; of the Lancastrians he had little fear; and the powerful fleet of Duke Charles prisoned the Earl's ships in the Norman harbours. Fortune however was with his foes A rising called Edward to the north in September, and while he was engaged in its suppression a storm swept the Burgundian ships from the Channel. Warwick seized the opportunity to cross the sea. On the thirteenth of September he landed with Clarence at Dartmouth, and with an army which grew at every step pushed rapidly northward to meet the King Taken as he was by surprize, Edward felt little dread of the conflict He relied on the secret promises of Clarence and on the repeated oaths of the two Nevilles, and called on Charles of Burgundy to cut off Warwick's retreat by sea after the victory on which he counted. But the Earl's army no sooner drew near than cries of "Long live King Henry!" from Montagu's camp announced his treason. Panic spread through the royal forces; and in the rout that followed Edward could only fly to the shore, and embarking some eight hundred men who still clung to him in a few trading vessels which he found there set sail for the coast of Holland.

Warwick's triumph

In a single fortnight Warwick had destroyed a throne. The work of Towton was undone. The House of Lancaster was restored. Henry the Sixth was drawn from

the Tower to play again the part of King, while his rival could only appeal as a destitute fugitive to the friendship of Charles the Bold. But Charles had small friendship to give. His disgust at the sudden overthrow of his plans for a joint attack on Lewis was quickened by a sense of danger. England was now at the French King's disposal, and the coalition of England and Burgundy against France which he had planned seemed likely to become a coalition of France and England against Burgundy. Lewis indeed was quick to seize on the new turn of affairs. Thanksgivings were ordered in every French town. Margaret and her son were feasted royally at Paris. An embassy crossed the sea to conclude a treaty of alliance, and Warwick promised that an immediate force of four thousand men should be despatched to Calais. With English aid the King felt he could become assailant in his turn; he declared the Duke of Burgundy a rebel, and pushed his army rapidly to the Somme. How keenly Charles felt his danger was seen in his refusal to receive Edward at his court, and in his desperate attempts to conciliate the new English government. His friendship, he said, was not for this or that English King but for England. He again boasted of his Lancastrian blood. He despatched the Lancastrian Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, who had found refuge ever since Towton at his court, to carry fair words to Margaret. The Queen and her son were still at Paris, detained as it was said by unfavourable winds, but really by the wish of Lewis to hold a check upon Warwick and by their own distrust of him. Triumphant indeed as he seemed, the Earl found himself alone in the hour of his triumph. The marriage of Prince Edward with Anne Neville, which had been promised as soon as Henry was restored, was his one security against the vengeance of the Lancastrians, and the continued delays of Margaret showed little eagerness to redeem her promise. The heads of the Lancastrian party, the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, had pledged

CHAP I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

themselves to Charles the Bold at their departure from his court to bring about Warwick's ruin. From Lewis he could look for no further help, for the remonstrances of the English merchants compelled him in spite of the treaty he had concluded to keep the troops he had promised against Burgundy at home. Of his own main supporters Clarence was only waiting for an opportunity of deserting him. Even his brother Montagu shrank from striking fresh blows to further the triumph of a party which aimed at the ruin of the Nevilles, and looked forward with dread to the coming of the Queen.

Fall of Warwick.

The preparations for her departure in March brought matters to a head. With a French Queen on the throne a French alliance became an instant danger for Burgundy, and Charles was driven to lend a secret ear to Edward's prayer for aid. Money and ships were placed at his service, and on the fourteenth of March 1471 the young King landed at Ravenspur on the estuary of the Humber with a force of two thousand men. In the north all remained quiet. York opened its gates when Edward professed to be seeking not the crown but his father's dukedom Montagu lay motionless at Pomfret as the little army marched by him to the south. Routing at Newark a force which had gathered on his flank, Edward pushed straight for Warwick, who had hurried from London to raise an army in his own county. His forces were already larger than those of his cousin, but the Earl cautiously waited within the walls of Coventry for the reinforcements under Clarence and Montagu which he believed to be hastening to his aid. The arrival of Clarence however was at once followed by his junction with Edward, and the offer of "good conditions" shows that Warwick himself was contemplating a similar treason when the coming of two Lancastrian leaders, the Duke of Exeter and the Earl of Oxford, put an end to the negotiation. The union of Montagu with his brother forced Edward to decisive action; he marched upon London, followed closely by

Warwick's army, and found its gates opened by the perfidy of Archbishop Neville. Again master of Henry of Lancaster who passed anew to the Tower, Edward sallied afresh from the capital two days after his arrival with an army strongly reinforced. At early dawn on the fourteenth of April the two hosts fronted one another at Barnet. A thick mist covered the field, and beneath its veil Warwick's men fought fiercely till dread of mutual betrayal ended the strife Montagu's followers attacked the Lancastrian soldiers of Lord Oxford, whether as some said through an error which sprang from the similarity of his cognizance to that of Edward's, or as the Lancastrians alleged while themselves in the act of deserting to the enemy. Warwick himself was charged with cowardly flight. In three hours the medley of carnage and treason was over. Four thousand men lay on the field, and the Earl and his brother were found among the slain.

Battle of Tewkesbury.

But the fall of the Nevilles was far from giving rest to Edward The restoration of Henry, the return of their old leaders, had revived the hopes of the Lancastrian party; and in the ruin of Warwick they saw only the removal of an obstacle to their cause. The great Lancastrian lords had been looking forward to a struggle with the Earl on Margaret's arrival, and their jealousy of him was seen in the choice of the Queen's landing-place. Instead of joining her husband and the Nevilles in London she disembarked from the French fleet at Weymouth, to find the men of the western counties already flocking to the standards of the Duke of Somerset and of the Courtenays, the Welsh arming at the call of Jasper Tudor, and Cheshire and Lancashire only waiting for her presence to rise. A march upon London with forces such as these would have left Warwick at her mercy and freed the Lancastrian throne from the supremacy of the Nevilles. The news of Barnet which followed hard on the Queen's landing scattered these plans to the winds; but the means which had been designed to overawe Warwick might still

CHAP. I. The Lords of York. 1461-1485.

be employed against his conqueror. Moving to Exeter to gather the men of Devonshire and Cornwall, Margaret turned through Taunton on Bath to hear that Edward was already encamped in her front at Cirencester. The young King's action showed his genius for war. Barnet was hardly fought when he was pushing to the west. After a halt at Abingdon to gain news of Margaret's movements he moved rapidly by Cirencester and Malmesbury towards the Lancastrians at Bath. But Margaret was as eager to avoid a battle before her Welsh reinforcements reached her as Edward was to force one on. Slipping aside to Bristol, and detaching a small body of troops to amuse the king by a feint upon Sodbury, her army reached Berkeley by a night-march and hurried forward through the following day to Tewkesbury. But rapid as their movements had been, they had failed to outstrip Edward. Marching on an inner line along the open Cotswold country while his enemy was struggling through the deep and tangled lanes of the Severn valley, the King was now near enough to bring Margaret to bay; and the Lancastrian leaders were forced to take their stand on the slopes south of the town, in a position approachable only through "foul lanes and deep dykes" Here Edward at once fell on them at day-break of the fourth of May. His army, if smaller in numbers, was superior in military quality to the motley host gathered round the Queen, for as at Barnet he had with him a force of Germans armed with hand-guns, then a new weapon in war, and a fine train of artillery. It was probably the fire from these that drew Somerset from the strong position which he held, but his repulse and the rout of the force he led was followed up with quick decision. A general advance broke the Lancastrian lines, and all was over. Three thousand were cut down on the field, and a large number of fugitives were taken in the town and abbey. To the leaders short shrift was given. Edward was resolute to make an end of his foes. The fall of the Duke of

Somerset extinguished the male branch of the House of Beaufort. Margaret was a prisoner; and with the murder of her son after his surrender on the field and the mysterious death of Henry the Sixth in the Tower which followed the King's return to the capital the direct line of Lancaster passed away.

Charles and the Empire.

Edward was at last master of his realm. No noble was likely to measure swords with the conqueror of the Nevilles. The one rival who could revive the Lancastrian claims, the last heir of the House of Beaufort, Henry Tudor, was a boy and an exile. The King was free to display his genius for war on nobler fields than those of Barnet and Tewkesbury, and for a while his temper and the passion of his people alike drove him to the strife with France. But the country was too exhausted to meddle in the attack on Lewis which Charles, assured at any rate against English hostility, renewed in 1472 in union with the Dukes of Guienne and Britanny, and which was foiled as of old through the death of the one ally and the desertion of the other. The failure aided in giving a turn to his policy, which was to bring about immense results on the after history of Europe. French as he was in blood, the nature of his possessions had made Charles from the first a German prince rather than a French. If he held of Lewis his duchy of Burgundy, his domain on the Somme, and Flanders west of the Scheldt, the mass of his dominions was held of the Empire While he failed too in extending his power on the one side it widened rapidly on the other. In war after war he had been unable to gain an inch of French ground beyond the towns of the Somme. But year after year had seen new gains on his German frontier. Elsass and the Breisgau passed into his hands as security for a loan to the Austrian Duke Sigismund; in 1473 he seized Lorraine by force of arms, and inherited from its Duke Gelderland and the county of Cleves. Master of the Upper Rhine and Lower Rhine, as well as of a crowd of German princedoms, Charles was

now the mightiest among the princes of the Empire, and in actual power superior to the Emperor himself. The house of Austria, in which the Imperial crown seemed to be becoming hereditary, was weakened by attacks from without as by divisions within, by the loss of Bohemia and Hungary, by the loss of its hold over German Switzerland, and still more by the mean and spiritless temper of its Imperial head, Frederick the Third. But its ambition remained boundless as ever; and in the Burgundian dominion, destined now to be the heritage of a girl, for Mary was the Duke's only child, it saw the means of building up a greatness such as it had never known. Its overtures at once turned the Duke's ambition from France to Germany. He was ready to give his daughter's hand to Frederick's son, Maximilian; but his price was that of succession to the Imperial crown, and his election to the dignity of King of the Romans In such an event the Empire and his vast dominions would pass together at his death to Maximilian, and the aim of the Austrian House would be realized It was to negotiate this marriage, a marriage which in the end was destined to shape the political map of modern Europe, that Duke and Emperor met in 1473 at Trier.

Peace with France. But if Frederick's policy was to strengthen his house the policy of the princes of the Empire lay in keeping it weak, and their pressure was backed by suspicions of the Duke's treachery and of the possibility of a later marriage whose male progeny might for ever exclude the house of Austria from the Imperial throne. Frederick's sudden flight broke up the conference; but Charles was far from relinquishing his plans To win the mastery of the whole Rhine valley was the first step in their realization, and at the opening of 1474 he undertook the siege of Neuss, whose reduction meant that of Koln and of the central district which broke his sway along it. But vast as were the new dreams of ambition which thus opened before Charles, he had given no open sign of his change of

purpose. Lewis watched his progress on the Rhine almost as jealously as his attitude on the Somme; and the friendship of England was still of the highest value as a check on any attempt of France to interrupt his plans. With this view the Duke maintained his relations with England and fed Edward's hopes of a joint invasion. In the summer of 1474, on the eve of his march upon the Rhine, he concluded a treaty for an attack on France which was to open on his return after the capture of Neuss. Edward was to recover Normandy and Aquitaine as well as his 'kingdom of France'; Champagne and Bar were to be the prizes of Charles. Through the whole of 1474 the English king prepared actively for war. A treaty was concluded with Britanny. The nation was wild with enthusiasm. Large supplies were granted by Parliament: and a large army gathered for the coming campaign. The plan of attack was a masterly one. While Edward moved from Normandy on Paris, the forces of Burgundy and of Britanny on his right hand and his left were to converge on the same point. But the aim of Charles in these negotiations was simply to hold Lewis from any intervention in his campaign on the Rhine. The siege of Neuss was not opened till the close of July, and its difficulties soon unfolded themselves. Once master of the whole Rhineland, the house of Austria saw that Charles would be strong enough to wrest from it the succession to the Empire; and while Sigismund paid back his loan and roused Elsass to revolt the Emperor Frederick brought the whole force of Germany to the relief of the town. From that moment the siege was a hopeless one, but Charles clung to it with stubborn pride through autumn, winter, and spring, and it was only at the close of June 1475 that the menace of new leagues against his dominions on the upper Rhineland forced him to withdraw. So broken was his army that he could not, even if he would, have aided in carrying out the schemes of the preceding year. But an English invasion would secure him from attack by Lewis till his forces could be reorganized;

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

and with the same unscrupulous selfishness as of old Charles pledged himself to co-operate and called on Edward to cross the Channel. In July Edward landed with an army of twenty-four thousand men at Calais. In numbers and in completeness of equipment no such force had as yet left English shores. But no Burgundian force was seen on the Somme; and after long delays Charles proposed that Edward should advance alone upon Paris on his assurance that the fortresses of the Somme would open their gates. The English army crossed the Somme and approached St Quentin, but it was repulsed from the walls by a discharge of artillery. It was now the middle of August, and heavy rains prevented further advance; while only excuses for delay came from Britanny and it became every day clearer that the Burgundian Duke had no real purpose to aid. Lewis seized the moment of despair to propose peace on terms which a conqueror might have accepted, the security of Britanny, the payment of what the English deemed a tribute of fifty thousand crowns a year, and the betrothal of Edward's daughter to the Dauphin. A separate treaty provided for mutual aid in case of revolt among the subjects of either king, and for mutual shelter should either be driven from his realm. In spite of remonstrances from the Duke of Burgundy this truce was signed at the close of August and the English soldiers recrossed the sea.

Edward's policy.

The desertion of Charles threw Edward whether he would or no on the French alliance; and the ruin of the Duke explains the tenacity with which he clung to it. Defeated by the Swiss at Morat in the following year, Charles fell in the opening of 1477 on the field of Nanci, and his vast dominion was left in his daughter's charge. Lewis seized Picardy and Artois, the Burgundian duchy and Franche Comté: and strove to gain the rest by forcing on Mary of Burgundy the hand of the Dauphin. But the Imperial dreams which had been fatal to Charles had to be carried out through the very ruin they wrought. Pressed by

revolt in Flanders and by the French king's greed, Mary gave her hand to the Emperor's son, Maximilian; and her heritage passed to the Austrian house. Edward took no part in the war between Lewis and Maximilian which followed on the marriage. The contest between England and France had drifted into a mightier European struggle between France and the House of Austria; and from this struggle the King wisely held aloof. He saw what Henry the Seventh saw after him, and what Henry the Eighth learned at last to see, that England could only join in such a contest as the tool of one or other of the combatants, a tool to be used while the struggle lasted and to be thrown aside as soon as it was over. With the growth of Austrian power England was secure from French aggression; and rapidly as Lewis was adding province after province to his dominions his loyalty to the pledge he had given of leaving Britanny untouched and his anxiety to conclude a closer treaty of amity in 1478 showed the price he set on his English alliance. Nor was Edward's course guided solely by considerations of foreign policy. A French alliance meant peace; and peace was needful for the plans which Edward proceeded steadily to carry out. With the closing years of his reign the Monarchy took a new colour. The introduction of an elaborate spy system, the use of the rack, and the practice of interference with the purity of justice gave the first signs of an arbitrary rule which the Tudors were to develope. It was on his creation of a new financial system that the King laid the foundation of a despotic rule. Rich, and secure at home as abroad, Edward had small need to call the Houses together; no parliament met for five years, and when one was called at last it was suffered to do little but raise the custom duties, which were now granted to the King for life. Sums were extorted from the clergy; monopolies were sold; the confiscations of the civil war filled the royal exchequer; Edward did not disdain to turn merchant on his own account. The promise of a

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

French war had not only drawn heavy subsidies from the Commons, much of which remained in the royal treasury through the abrupt close of the strife, but enabled the King to deal a deadly blow at the liberty which the Commons had won. Edward set aside the usage of contracting loans by authority of parliament; and calling before him the merchants of London, begged from each a gift or "benevolence" in proportion to the royal needs. How bitterly this exaction was resented even by the classes with whom the King had been most popular was seen in the protest which the citizens addressed to his successor against these "extortions and new impositions against the laws of God and man and the liberty and laws of this realm" But for the moment resistance was fruitless, and the "benevolence" of Edward was suffered to furnish a precedent for the forced loans of Wolsey and of Charles the First

Popularization of knowledge.

In the history of intellectual progress his reign takes a brighter colour The founder of a new despotism presents a claim to our regard as the patron of Caxton. It is in the life of the first English printer that we see the new upgrowth of larger and more national energies which were to compensate for the decay of the narrower energies of the Middle Age Beneath the mouldering forms of the old world a new world was bursting into life; if the fifteenth century was an age of death it was an age of birth as well, of that new birth, that Renascence, from which the after life of Europe was to flow The force which till now concentrated itself in privileged classes was beginning to diffuse itself through nations. The tendency of the time was to expansion, to diffusion. The smaller gentry and the merchant class rose in importance as the nobles fell. Religion and morality passed out of the hands of the priesthood into those of the laity. Knowledge became vulgarized, it stooped to lower and meaner forms that it might educate the whole people. England was slow to catch the intellectual fire which was already burning

brightly across the Alps, but even amidst the turmoil of its wars and revolutions intelligence was being more widely spread. While the older literary class was dying out, a glance beneath the surface shows us the stir of a new interest in knowledge amongst the masses of the people itself. The very character of the authorship of the time, its love of compendiums and abridgements of such scientific and historical knowledge as the world believed it possessed, its dramatic performances or mysteries, the commonplace morality of its poets, the popularity of its rimed chronicles, are proof that literature was ceasing to be the possession of a purely intellectual class and was beginning to appeal to the nation at large. The correspondence of the Paston family not only displays a fluency and grammatical correctness which would have been impossible a few years before, but shows country squires discussing about books and gathering libraries. The increased use of linen paper in place of the costlier parchment helped in the popularization of letters. In no former age had finer copies of books been produced; in none had so many been transcribed. This increased demand for their production caused the processes of copying and illuminating manuscripts to be transferred from the scriptoria of the religious houses into the hands of trade-gilds like the Gild of St. John at Bruges or the Brothers of the Pen at Brussels. It was in fact this increase of demand for books, pamphlets, or fly-sheets, especially of a grammatical or religious character, in the middle of the fifteenth century that brought about the introduction of printing. We meet with the first records of the printer's art in rude sheets struck off from wooden blocks, "block-books" as they are now called. Later on came the vast advance of printing from separate and moveable types. Originating at Maintz with the three famous printers, Gutenberg, Fust, and Schœffer, this new process travelled southward to Strassburg, crossed the Alps to Venice, where it lent itself through the Aldi

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

to the spread of Greek literature in Europe, and then floated down the Rhine to the towns of Flanders.

Caxton. It was probably at the press of Colard Mansion, in a little room over the porch of St. Donat's at Bruges, that William Caxton learned the art which he was the first to introduce into England. A Kentish boy by birth, but apprenticed to a London mercer, Caxton had already spent thirty years of his manhood in Flanders as Governor of the English gild of Merchant Adventurers there when we find him engaged as copyist in the service of Edward's sister, Duchess Margaret of Burgundy. But the tedious process of copying was soon thrown aside for the new art which Colard Mansion had introduced into Bruges. "For as much as in the writing of the same," Caxton tells us in the preface to his first printed work, the Tales of Troy, "my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with over much looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labour as it hath been and that age creepeth on me daily and feebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them as hastily as I might the said book, therefore I have practised and learned at my great charge and dispense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as ye may see, and is not written with pen and ink as other books be, to the end that every man may have them at once, for all the books of this story here emprynted as ye see were begun in one day and also finished in one day." The printing-press was the precious freight he brought back to England in 1476 after an absence of five-and-thirty years. Through the next fifteen, at an age when other men look for ease and retirement, we see him plunging with characteristic energy into his new occupation. His "red pale", or heraldic shield marked with a red bar down the middle, invited buyers to the press he established in the Almonry at Westminster, a little enclosure contain-

ing a chapel and almshouses near the west front of the church, where the alms of the abbey were distributed to the poor. "If it please any man, spiritual or temporal," runs his advertisement, "to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury all emprynted after the form of the present letter, which be well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the Almonry at the red pale, and he shall have them good chepe." Caxton was a practical man of business, as this advertisement shows, no rival of the Venetian Aldi or of the classical printers of Rome, but resolved to get a living from his trade, supplying priests with service books and preachers with sermons, furnishing the clerk with his "Golden Legend" and knight and baron with "joyous and pleasant histories of chivalry." But while careful to win his daily bread, he found time to do much for what of higher literature lay fairly to hand. He printed all the English poetry of any moment which was then in existence. His reverence for that "worshipful man, Geoffrey Chaucer," who "ought to be eternally remembered," is shown not merely by his edition of the "Canterbury Tales," but by his reprint of them when a purer text of the poem offered itself. The poems of Lydgate and Gower were added to those of Chaucer. The Chronicle of Brut and Higden's "Polychronicon" were the only available works of an historical character then existing in the English tongue, and Caxton not only printed them but himself continued the latter up to his own time. A translation of Boethius, a version of the Eneid from the French, and a tract or two of Cicero, were the stray first-fruits of the classical press in England.

Caxton's work.

Busy as was Caxton's printing-press, he was even busier as a translator than as a printer. More than four thousand of his printed pages are from works of his own rendering. The need of these translations shows the popular drift of literature at the time; but keen as the demand seems to have been, there is nothing mechanical in the temper with

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

which Caxton prepared to meet it. A natural, simple-hearted taste and enthusiasm, especially for the style and forms of language, breaks out in his curious prefaces. "Having no work in hand," he says in the preface to his Eneid, "I sitting in my study where as lay many divers pamphlets and books, happened that to my hand came a little book in French, which late was translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France—which book is named Eneydos, and made in Latin by that noble poet and great clerk Vergyl—in which book I had great pleasure by reason of the fair and honest termes and wordes in French which I never saw to-fore-like, none so pleasant nor so well ordered, which book as me seemed should be much requisite for noble men to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories; and when I had advised me to this said book I deliberated and concluded to translate it into English, and forthwith took a pen and ink and wrote a leaf or twain." But the work of translation involved a choice of English which made Caxton's work important in the history of our language. He stood between two schools of translation, that of French affectation and English pedantry. It was a moment when the character of our literary tongue was being settled, and it is curious to see in his own words the struggle over it which was going on in Caxton's time. "Some honest and great clerks have been with me and desired me to write the most curious terms that I could find," on the other hand, "some gentlemen of late blamed me, saying that in my translations I had over many curious terms which could not be understood of common people, and desired me to use old and homely terms in my translations." "Fain would I please every man," comments the good-humoured printer, but his sturdy sense saved him alike from the temptations of the court and the schools. His own taste pointed to English, but "to the common terms that be daily used" rather than to the English of his antiquarian advisers. "I took an old book and read therein, and

certainly the English was so rude and broad I could not well understand it," while the Old-English charters which the Abbot of Westminster lent as models from the archives of his house seemed "more like to Dutch than to English." To adopt current phraseology however was by no means easy at a time when even the speech of common talk was in a state of rapid flux. "Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born." Not only so, but the tongue of each shire was still peculiar to itself and hardly intelligible to men of another county. "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland and went on land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have eggs, but she understood him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo! what should a man in these days now write," adds the puzzled printer, "eggs or eyren? certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language." His own mother-tongue too was that of "Kent in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place in England;" and coupling this with his long absence in Flanders we can hardly wonder at the confession he makes over his first translation, that "when all these things came to fore me, after that I had made and written a five or six quires, I fell in despair of this work, and purposed never to have continued therein, and the quires laid apart, and in two years after laboured no more in this work."

He was still however busy translating when he died.

CHAP. I. — The House of York. — 1461-1485. —

All difficulties in fact were lightened by the general interest which his labours aroused. When the length of the "Golden Legend" makes him "half desperate to have accomplished it" and ready to "lay it apart," the Earl of Arundel solicits him in no wise to leave it and promises a yearly fee of a buck in summer and a doe in winter, once it were done. "Many noble and divers gentle men of this realm came and demanded many and often times wherefore I have not made and imprinted the noble history of the 'San Graal.'" We see his visitors discussing with the sagacious printer the historic existence of Arthur. Duchess Margaret of Somerset lent him her "Blanchardine and Eglantine;" an Archdeacon of Colchester brought him his translation of the work called "Cato;" a mercer of London pressed him to undertake the "Royal Book" of Philip le Bel. Earl Rivers chatted with him over his own translation of the "Sayings of the Philosophers." Even kings showed their interest in his work; his "Tully" was printed under the patronage of Edward the Fourth, his "Order of Chivalry" dedicated to Richard the Third, his "Facts of Arms" published at the desire of Henry the Seventh. Caxton profited in fact by the wide literary interest which was a mark of the time. The fashion of large and gorgeous libraries had passed from the French to the English princes of his day: Henry the Sixth had a valuable collection of books; that of the Louvre was seized by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and formed the basis of the fine library which he presented to the University of Oxford. Great nobles took an active and personal part in the literary revival. The warrior, Sir John Fastolf, was a well-known lover of books. Earl Rivers was himself one of the authors of the day; he found leisure in the intervals of pilgrimages and politics to translate the "Sayings of the Philosophers" and a couple of religious tracts for Caxton's press. A friend of far greater intellectual distinction however than these was found in John Tiptoft Earl of Worcester. He had

wandered during the reign of Henry the Sixth in search of learning to Italy, had studied at her universities and become a teacher at Padua, where the elegance of his Latinity drew tears from the most learned of the Popes, Pius the Second, better known as Æneas Sylvius. Caxton can find no words warm enough to express his admiration of one "which in his time flowered in virtue and cunning, to whom I know none like among the lords of the temporality in science and moral virtue." But the ruthlessness of the Renascence appeared in Tiptoft side by side with its intellectual vigour, and the fall of one whose cruelty had earned him the surname of "the Butcher" even amidst the horrors of civil war was greeted with sorrow by none but the faithful printer "What great loss was it," he says in a preface printed long after his fall, "of that noble, virtuous, and well-disposed lord; when I remember and advertise his life, his science, and his virtue, me thinketh (God not displeased) over great the loss of such a man considering his estate and cunning"

Richard of Gloucester.

Among the nobles who encouraged the work of Caxton was the King's youngest brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester. Edward had never forgiven Clarence his desertion; and his impeachment in 1478 on a charge of treason, a charge soon followed by his death in the Tower, brought Richard nearer to the throne. Ruthless and subtle as Edward himself, the Duke was already renowned as a warrior; his courage and military skill had been shown at Barnet and Tewkesbury; and at the close of Edward's reign an outbreak of strife with the Scots enabled him to march in triumph upon Edinburgh in 1482. The sudden death of his brother called Richard at once to the front. Worn with excesses, though little more than forty years old, Edward died in the spring of 1483, and his son Edward the Fifth succeeded peacefully to the throne. The succession of a boy of thirteen woke again the fierce rivalries of the court. The Woodvilles had the young King in their hands; but Lord Hastings, the chief

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

adviser of his father, at once joined with Gloucester and the Duke of Buckingham, the heir of Edward the Third's youngest son and one of the greatest nobles of the realm, to overthrow them. The efforts of the Queen-mother to obtain the regency were foiled, Lord Rivers and two Woodvilles were seized and sent to the block, and the King transferred to the charge of Richard, who was proclaimed by a great council of bishops and nobles Protector of the Realm. But if he hated the Queen's kindred Hastings was as loyal as the Woodvilles themselves to the children of Edward the Fourth; and the next step of the two Dukes was to remove this obstacle. Little more than a month had passed after the overthrow of the Woodvilles when Richard suddenly entered the Council-chamber and charged Hastings with sorcery and attempts upon his life. As he dashed his hand upon the table the room filled with soldiery. "I will not dine," said the Duke, turning to the minister, "till they have brought me your head." Hastings was hurried to execution in the court-yard of the Tower, his fellow-counsellors thrown into prison, and the last check on Richard's ambition was removed. Buckingham lent him his aid in a claim of the crown, and on the twenty-fifth of June the Duke consented after some show of reluctance to listen to the prayer of a Parliament hastily gathered together, which, setting aside Edward's children as the fruit of an unlawful marriage and those of Clarence as disabled by his attainder, besought him to take the office and title of King.

Henry Tudor.

Violent as his acts had been, Richard's career had as yet jarred little with popular sentiment The Woodvilles were unpopular, Hastings was detested as the agent of Edward's despotism, the reign of a child-king was generally deemed impossible. The country, longing only for peace after all its storms, called for a vigorous and active ruler; and Richard's vigour and ability were seen in his encounter with the first danger that threatened his throne. The new

revolution had again roused the hopes of the Lancastrian party. With the deaths of Henry the Sixth and his son all the descendants of Henry the Fourth passed away; but the line of John of Gaunt still survived in the heir of the Beauforts. The legality of the royal act which barred their claim to the crown was a more than questionable one; the Beauforts had never admitted it, and the conduct of Henry the Sixth in his earlier years points to a belief in their right of succession. Their male line was extinguished by the fall of the last Duke of Somerset at Tewkesbury, but the claim of the house was still maintained by the son of Margaret Beaufort, the daughter of Duke John and great-grand-daughter of John of Gaunt. While still but a girl Margaret had become both wife and mother. She had wedded the Earl of Richmond, Edmund Tudor, a son of Henry the Fifth's widow, Katharine of France, by a marriage with a Welsh squire, Owen Tudor; and had given birth to a son, the later Henry the Seventh. From very childhood the life of Henry had been a troubled one. His father died in the year of his birth; his uncle and guardian, Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, was driven from the realm on the fall of the House of Lancaster; and the boy himself, attainted at five years old, remained a prisoner till the restoration of Henry the Sixth by Lord Warwick. But Edward's fresh success drove him from the realm, and escaping to Britanny he was held there, half-guest, half-prisoner, by its Duke. The extinction of the direct Lancastrian line had given Henry a new importance. Edward the Fourth never ceased to strive for his surrender, and if the Breton Duke refused to give him up, his alliance with the English King was too valuable to be imperilled by suffering him to go free. The value of such a check on Richard was seen by Lewis of France; and his demands for Henry's surrender into his hands drove the Duke of Britanny, who was now influenced by a minister in Richard's pay, to seek for aid from England. In June the King sent a thousand archers to Britanny; but

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

the troubles of the Duchy had done more for Henry than Lewis could have done. The nobles rose against Duke and minister; and in the struggle that followed the young Earl was free to set sail as he would.

Richard's reign.

He found unexpected aid in the Duke of Buckingham, whose support had done much to put Richard on the throne. Though rewarded with numerous grants and the post of Constable, Buckingham's greed was still unsated; and on the refusal of his demand of the lands belonging to the earldom of Hereford the Duke lent his ear to the counsels of Margaret Beaufort, who had married his brother, Henry Stafford, but still remained true to the cause of her boy. Buckingham looked no doubt to the chance of fooling Yorkist and Lancastrian alike, and of pressing his own claims to the throne on Richard's fall. But he was in the hands of subtler plotters Morton, the exiled Bishop of Ely, had founded a scheme of union on the disappearance of Edward the Fifth and his brother, who had been imprisoned in the Tower since Richard's accession to the throne, and were now believed to have been murdered by his orders. The death of the boys left their sister Elizabeth, who had taken sanctuary at Westminster with her mother, the heiress of Edward the Fourth; and the scheme of Morton was to unite the discontented Yorkists with what remained of the Lancastrian party by the marriage of Elizabeth with Henry Tudor. The Queen-mother and her kindred gave their consent to this plan, and a wide revolt was organized under Buckingham's leadership. In October 1483 the Woodvilles and their adherents rose in Wiltshire, Kent, and Berkshire, the Courtenays in Devon, while Buckingham marched to their support from Wales. Troubles in Britanny had at this moment freed Henry Tudor, and on the news of the rising he sailed with a strong fleet and five thousand soldiers on board. A proclamation of the new pretender announced to the nation what seems as yet to have been carefully hidden, the death of the princes in the Tower. But,

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

whether the story was believed or no, the duration of the revolt was too short for it to tell upon public opinion. Henry's fleet was driven back by a storm, Buckingham was delayed by a flood in the Severn, and the smaller outbreaks were quickly put down. Richard showed little inclination to deal roughly with the insurgents. Buckingham indeed was beheaded, but the bulk of his followers were pardoned, and the overthrow of her hopes reconciled the Queen-mother to the King. She quitted the sanctuary with Elizabeth, and thus broke up the league on which Henry's hopes hung. But Richard was too wary a statesman to trust for safety to mere force of arms. He resolved to enlist the nation on his side. During his brother's reign he had watched the upgrowth of public discontent as the new policy of the monarchy developed itself, and he now appealed to England as the restorer of its ancient liberties. "We be determined," said the citizens of London in a petition to the King, "rather to adventure and to commit us to the peril of our lives and jeopardy of death than to live in such thraldom and bondage as we have lived some time heretofore, oppressed and injured by extortions and new impositions against the laws of God and man and the liberty and laws of this realm wherein every Englishman is inherited." Richard met the appeal by convoking Parliament in January 1484, and by sweeping measures of reform. The practice of extorting money by benevolences was declared illegal, while grants of pardons and remissions of forfeitures reversed in some measure the policy of terror by which Edward at once held the country in awe and filled his treasury. Numerous statutes broke the slumbers of Parliamentary legislation. A series of mercantile enactments strove to protect the growing interests of English commerce. The King's love of literature showed itself in a provision that no statutes should act as a hindrance "to any artificer or merchant stranger, of what nation or country he be, for

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

bringing into this realm or selling by retail or otherwise of any manner of books, written or imprinted." His prohibition of the iniquitous seizure of goods before conviction of felony which had prevailed during Edward's reign, his liberation of the bondmen who still remained unenfranchised on the royal domain, and his religious foundations show Richard's keen anxiety to purchase a popularity in which the bloody opening of his reign might be forgotten.

Bosworth Field.

It was doubtless the same wish to render his throne popular which led Richard to revive the schemes of a war with France. He had strongly remonstrated against his brother's withdrawal and alliance in 1475, and it must have been rather a suspicion of his warlike designs than any horror at the ruthlessness of his ambition which led Lewis the Eleventh on his death-bed to refuse to recognize his accession. At the close of Edward the Fourth's reign the alliance which had bound the two countries together was brought to an end by the ambition and faithlessness of the French King. The war between Lewis and Maximilian ended at the close of 1482 through the sudden death of Mary of Burgundy and the reluctance of the Flemish towns to own Maximilian's authority as guardian of her son, Philip, the heir of the Burgundian states. Lewis was able to conclude a treaty at Arras, by which Philip's sister, Margaret, was betrothed to the Dauphin Charles, and brought with her as dower the counties of Artois and Burgundy. By the treaty with England Charles was already betrothed to Edward's daughter, Elizabeth; and this open breach of treaty was followed by the cessation of the subsidy which had been punctually paid since 1475. France in fact had no more need of buying English neutrality. Galled as he was, Edward's death but a few months later hindered any open quarrel, but the refusal of Lewis to recognize Richard and his attempts to force from Britanny the surrender of Henry Tudor added to the estrangement of the two courts, and we can hardly wonder that on the death of the French King only a few

months after his accession Richard seized the opportunity which the troubles at the French court afforded him. Charles the Eighth was a minor; and the control of power was disputed as of old between the Regent, Anne of Beaujeu, and the Duke of Orleans. Orleans entered into correspondence with Richard and Maximilian, whom Anne's policy was preventing from gaining the mastery over the Low Countries, and preparations were making for a coalition which would have again brought an English army and the young English King on to the soil of France. It was to provide against this danger that Anne had received Henry Tudor at the French court when the threat of delivering him up to Richard forced him to quit Britanny after the failure of his first expedition; and she met the new coalition by encouraging the Earl to renew his attack. Had Richard retained his popularity the attempt must have ended in a failure even more disastrous than before. But the news of the royal children's murder had slowly spread through the nation, and even the most pitiless shrank aghast before this crowning deed of blood. The pretence of a constitutional rule too was soon thrown off, and in the opening of 1485 a general irritation was caused by the levy of benevolences in defiance of the statute which had just been passed. The King felt himself safe; the consent of the Queen-mother to his contemplated marriage with her daughter Elizabeth appeared to secure him against any danger from the discontented Yorkists; and Henry, alone and in exile, seemed a small danger. Henry however had no sooner landed at Milford Haven than a wide conspiracy revealed itself. Lord Stanley had as yet stood foremost among Richard's adherents; he had supported him in the rising of 1483 and had been rewarded with Buckingham's post of Constable. His brother too stood high in the King's confidence. But Margaret Beaufort, again left a widow, wedded Lord Stanley; and turned her third marriage, as she had turned her second,

CHAP. I. The House of York. 1461-1485.

to the profit of her boy. A pledge of support from her husband explains the haste with which Henry pressed forward to his encounter with the king. The treason however was skilfully veiled; and though defection after defection warned Richard of his danger as Henry moved against him, the Stanleys still remained by his side and held command of a large body of his forces. But the armies no sooner met on the twenty-second of August at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire than their treason was declared. The forces under Lord Stanley abandoned the King when the battle began; a second body of troops under the Earl of Northumberland drew off as it opened. In the crisis of the fight Sir William Stanley passed over to Henry's side. With a cry of "Treason! treason!" Richard flung himself into the thick of the battle, and in the fury of his despair he had already dashed the Lancastrian standard to the ground and hewed his way into the presence of his rival when he fell overpowered with numbers, and the crown which he had worn and which was found as the struggle ended lying near a hawthorn bush was placed on the head of the conqueror.

CHAPTER II.

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

1485–1514.

Henry the Seventh.

STILL young, for he was hardly thirty when his victory at Bosworth placed him on the throne, the temper of Henry the Seventh seemed to promise the reign of a poetic dreamer rather than of a statesman. The spare form, the sallow face, the quick eye, lit now and then with a fire that told of his Celtic blood, the shy, solitary humour which was only broken by outbursts of pleasant converse or genial sarcasm, told of an inner concentration and enthusiasm; and to the last Henry's mind remained imaginative and adventurous He dreamed of crusades, he dwelt with delight on the legends of Arthur which Caxton gave to the world in the year of his accession. His tastes were literary and artistic. He called foreign scholars to his court to serve as secretaries and historiographers; he trained his children in the highest culture of their day; he was a patron of the new printing press, a lover of books and of art. The chapel at Westminster which bears his name reflects his passion for architecture. But life gave Henry little leisure for dreams or culture. From the first he had to struggle for very existence against the dangers that beset him. A battle and treason had given him the throne; treason and a battle might dash him from it. His claim of blood was an uncertain and disputable one even by men of his own party. He stood

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

attainted by solemn Act of Parliament; and though the judges ruled that the possession of the crown cleared all attaint the stigma and peril remained. His victory had been a surprize; he could not trust the nobles; of fifty-two peers he dared summon only a part to the Parliament which assembled after his coronation and gave its recognition to his claim of the crown. The act made no mention of hereditary right, or of any right by conquest, but simply declared "that the inheritance of the crown should be, rest, remain, and abide in the most royal person of their sovereign Lord, King Henry the Seventh, and the heirs of his body lawfully ensuing." Such a declaration gave Henry a true Parliamentary title to his throne; and his consciousness of this was shown in a second act which assumed him to have been King since the death of Henry the Sixth and attainted Richard and his adherents as rebels and traitors. But such an act was too manifestly unjust to give real strength to his throne; it was in fact practically undone in 1495 when a new statute declared that no one should henceforth be attainted for serving a de facto king; and so insecure seemed Henry's title that no power acknowledged him as King save France and the Pope, and the support of France—gained as men believed by a pledge to abandon the English claims on Normandy and Guienne—was as perilous at home as it was useful abroad.

Revolt of Simnel.

It was in vain that he carried out his promise to Morton and the Woodvilles by marrying Elizabeth of York; he had significantly delayed the marriage till he was owned as King in his own right, and a purely Lancastrian claim to the throne roused wrath in every Yorkist which no after match could allay. During the early years of his reign the country was troubled with local insurrections, some so obscure that they have escaped the notice of our chroniclers, some, like that of Lovel and of the Staffords, general and formidable. The turmoil within was quickened by encouragement from without. The

Yorkist sympathies of the Earl of Kildare, the deputy of Ireland, offered a starting-point for a descent from the west; while the sister of Edward the Fourth, the Duchess Margaret of Burgundy, a fanatic in the cause of her house, was ready to aid any Yorkist attempt from Flanders. A trivial rising in 1486 proved to be the prelude of a vast conspiracy in the following year. The Earl of Warwick, the son of the Duke of Clarence and thus next male heir of the Yorkist line, had been secured by Henry as by Richard in the Tower; but in the opening of 1487 Lambert Simnel, a boy carefully trained for the purpose of this imposture, landed under his name in Ireland. The whole island espoused Simnel's cause, the Lord Deputy supported him, and he was soon joined by the Earl of Lincoln, John de la Pole, the son of a sister of Edward the Fourth by the Duke of Suffolk, and who on the death of Richard's son had been recognized by that sovereign as his heir. Edward's queen and the Woodvilles seem to have joined in the plot, and Margaret sent troops which enabled the pretender to land in Lancashire. But Henry was quick to meet the danger, and the impostor's defeat at Stoke near Newark proved fatal to the hopes of the Yorkists. Simnel was taken and made a scullion in the King's kitchen, Lincoln fell on the field.

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

Henry's Government.

The victory of Stoke set Henry free to turn to the inner government of his realm. He took up with a new vigour and fulness the policy of Edward the Fourth. Parliament was only summoned on rare and critical occasions. It was but twice convened during the last thirteen years of Henry's reign. The chief aim of the King was the accumulation of a treasure which should relieve him from the need of ever appealing for its aid. Subsidies granted for the support of wars which Henry evaded formed the base of a royal treasure which was swelled by the revival of dormant claims of the crown, by the exaction of fines for the breach of forgotten tenures, and by a host of petty extortions. Benevolences were again revived. A dilemma of Henry's

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

minister, which received the name of "Morton's fork," extorted gifts to the exchequer from men who lived handsomely on the ground that their wealth was manifest, and from those who lived plainly on the plea that economy had made them wealthy. Still greater sums were drawn from those who were compromised in the revolts which chequered the King's rule It was with his own hand that Henry endorsed the rolls of fines imposed after every insurrection. So successful were these efforts that at the end of his reign the King bequeathed a hoard of two millions to his successor. The same imitation of Edward's policy was seen in Henry's civil government. Broken as was the strength of the baronage, there still remained lords whom the new monarch watched with a jealous solicitude. Their power lay in the hosts of disorderly retainers who swarmed round their houses, ready to furnish a force in case of revolt, while in peace they became centres of outrage and defiance to the law. Edward had ordered the dissolution of these military households in his Statute of Liveries, and the statute was enforced by Henry with the utmost severity On a visit to the Earl of Oxford, one of the most devoted adherents of the Lancastrian cause, the King found two long lines of liveried retainers drawn up to receive him. "I thank you for your good cheer, my Lord," said Henry as they parted, "but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight My attorney must speak with you." The Earl was glad to escape with a fine of £10,000. It was with a special view to the suppression of this danger that Henry employed the criminal jurisdiction of the royal Council. The King in his Council had always asserted a right in the last resort to enforce justice and peace by dealing with offenders too strong to be dealt with by his ordinary courts. Henry systematized this occasional jurisdiction by appointing in 1486 a committee of his Council as a regular court, to which the place where it usually sat gave the name of the Court of Star Chamber. The King's aim was probably little more than a purpose to

enforce order on the land by bringing the great nobles before his own judgement-seat; but the establishment of the court as a regular and no longer an exceptional tribunal, whose traditional powers were confirmed by Parliamentary statute, and where the absence of a jury cancelled the prisoner's right to be tried by his peers, furnished his son with an instrument of tyranny which laid justice at the feet of the monarchy. CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

War of Britanny.

In his foreign policy Henry like Edward clung to a system of peace. His aim was to keep England apart, independent of the two great continental powers which during the Wars of the Roses had made revolutions at their will. Peace indeed was what Henry needed, whether for the general welfare of the land, or for the building up of his own system of rule. Peace however was hard to win. The old quarrel with France seemed indeed at an end; for it was Henry's pledge of friendship which had bought the French aid that enabled him to mount the throne. But in England itself hatred of the French burned fiercely as ever; and the growth of the French monarchy in extent and power through the policy of Lewis the Eleventh, his extinction of the great feudatories, and the administrative centralization he introduced, made even the coolest English statesman look on it as a danger to the realm. Only Britanny broke the long stretch of French coast which fronted England; and the steady refusal of Edward the Fourth to suffer Lewis to attack the Duchy showed the English sense of its value. Under its new King however, Charles the Eighth, France showed her purpose of annexing Britanny. Henry contented himself for a while with sending a few volunteers to aid in resistance; but when the death of the Duke left Britanny and its heiress, Anne, at the mercy of the French King the country called at once for war. Henry was driven to find allies in the states which equally dreaded the French advance, in the house of Austria and in the new power of Spain, to call on Parliament for supplies, and to cross the Channel in 1492 with twenty-

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514. — *Henry and Ireland.*

five thousand men. But his allies failed him; a marriage of Charles with Anne gave the Duchy irretrievably to the French King, and troubles at home brought Henry to listen to terms of peace on payment of a heavy subsidy.

Both kings indeed were eager for peace. Charles was anxious to free his hands for the designs he was forming against Italy. What forced Henry to close the war was the appearance of a new pretender. At the opening of 1492, at the moment when the King was threatening a descent on the French coast, a youth calling himself Richard, Duke of York, landed suddenly in Ireland. His story of an escape from the Tower and of his bringing up in Portugal was accepted by a crowd of partizans; but he was soon called by Charles to France, and his presence there adroitly used to wring peace from the English King as the price of his abandonment. At the conclusion of peace the pretender found a new refuge with Duchess Margaret; his claims were recognized by the House of Austria and the King of Scots, while Henry, who declared the youth's true name to be Perkin Warbeck, weakened his cause by conflicting accounts of his origin and history. Fresh Yorkist plots sprang up in England The Duchess gathered a fleet, Maximilian sent soldiers to the young claimant's aid, and in 1495 he sailed for England with a force as large as that which had followed Henry ten years before. But he found a different England Though fierce outbreaks still took place in the north, the country at large had tasted the new sweets of order and firm government, and that reaction of feeling, that horror of civil wars, which gave their strength to the Tudors had already begun to show its force. The pretender's troops landed at Deal only to be seized by the country folk and hung as pirates. Their leader sailed on to Ireland. Here too however he found a new state of things. Since the recall of Richard and his army in 1399 English sovereignty over the island had dwindled to a shadow. For a hundred years the native chieftains

had ruled without check on one side the Pale, and the lords of the Pale had ruled with but little check on the other. But in 1494 Henry took the country in hand. Sir Edward Poynings, a tried soldier, was despatched as deputy to Ireland with troops at his back. English officers, English judges were quietly sent over. The lords of the Pale were scared by the seizure of their leader, the Earl of Kildare. The Parliament of the Pale was bridled by a statute passed at the Deputy's dictation; the famous Poynings' Act, by which it was forbidden to treat of any matters save those first approved of by the English King and his Council. It was this new Ireland that the pretender found when he appeared off its coast. He withdrew in despair, and Henry at once set about finishing his work. The time had not yet come when England was strong enough to hold Ireland by her own strength. For a while the Lords of the Pale must still serve as the English garrison against the unconquered Irish, and Henry called his prisoner Kildare to his presence. "All Ireland cannot rule this man," grumbled his ministers. "Then shall he rule all Ireland," laughed the King, and Kildare returned as Lord Deputy to hold the country loyally in Henry's name.

Henry and Scotland.

The same political forecast, winning from very danger the elements of future security, was seen in the King's dealings with Scotland. From the moment when England finally abandoned the fruitless effort to subdue it the story of Scotland had been a miserable one. Whatever peace might be concluded, a sleepless dread of the old danger from the south tied the country to an alliance with France, and this alliance dragged it into the vortex of the Hundred Years' War. But after the final defeat and capture of David on the field of Neville's Cross the struggle died down on both sides into marauding forays and battles, like those of Otterburn and Homildon Hill, in which alternate victories were won by the feudal lords of the Scotch or English border. The ballad of "Chevy

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

Chase" brings home to us *the spirit of the contest*, the daring and defiance which stirred Sidney's heart "like a trumpet." But the effect of the struggle on the internal developement of Scotland was utterly ruinous. The houses of Douglas and of March which it raised into supremacy only interrupted their strife with England to battle fiercely with one another or to coerce their King. The power of the Crown sank in fact into insignificance under the earlier sovereigns of the line of Stuart which succeeded to the throne on the extinction of the male line of Bruce in 1371. Invasions and civil feuds not only arrested but even rolled back the national industry and prosperity. The country was a chaos of disorder and misrule, in which the peasant and the trader were the victims of feudal outrage. The Border became a lawless land, where robbery and violence reigned utterly without check. So pitiable seemed the state of the kingdom that at the opening of the fifteenth century the clans of the Highlands drew together to swoop upon it as a certain prey; but the common peril united the factions of the nobles, and the victory of Harlaw saved the Lowlands from the rule of the Celt.

Margaret Tudor.

A great name at last broke the line of the Scottish kings. Schooled by a long captivity in England, James the First returned to his realm in 1424 to be the ablest of her rulers as he was the first of her poets. In the twelve years of a wonderful reign justice and order were restored for the while, the Scotch Parliament organized, the clans of the Highlands assailed in their own fastnesses and reduced to swear fealty to the "Saxon" king. James turned to assail the great houses; but feudal violence was still too strong for the hand of the law, and a band of ruffians who burst into his chamber left the King lifeless with sixteen stabs in his body. His death in 1437 was the signal for a struggle between the House of Douglas and the Crown which lasted through half a century. Order however crept gradually in; the exile of the

Douglases left the Scottish monarchs supreme in the Lowlands; while their dominion over the Highlands was secured by the ruin of the Lords of the Isles. But in its outer policy the country still followed in the wake of France; every quarrel between French King and English King brought danger with it on the Scottish border; and the war of Brittany at once set James the Fourth among Henry's foes.* James welcomed the fugitive pretender at his court after his failure in Ireland, wedded him to his cousin, and in 1497 marched with him to the south. Not a man however greeted the Yorkist claimant, the country mustered to fight him; and an outbreak among his nobles, many of whom Henry had in his pay, called the Scot-King back again. Abandonment of the pretender was the first provision of peace between the two countries. Forced to quit Scotland the youth threw himself on the Cornish coast, drawn there by a revolt in June, only two months before his landing, which had been stirred up by the heavy taxation for the Scotch war, and in which a force of Cornishmen had actually pushed upon London and only been dispersed by the King's artillery on Blackheath. His temper however shrank from any real encounter; and though he succeeded in raising a body of Cornishmen and marched on Taunton, at the approach of the royal forces he fled from his army, took sanctuary at Beaulieu, and surrendered on promise of life. But the close of this danger made no break in Henry's policy of winning Scotland to a new attitude towards his realm. The lure to James was the hand of the English King's daughter, Margaret Tudor. For five years the negotiations dragged wearily along. The bitter hate of the two peoples blocked the way, and even Henry's ministers objected that the English crown might be made by the match the heritage of a Scottish king. "Then," they said "Scotland will annex England." "No," said the King with shrewd sense; "in such a case England would annex Scotland, for the greater always draws to it the less." His

CHAP. II.

The Revival of Learning.

1485-1514.

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. — 1485-1514. — *The Spanish Marriage.*

steady pressure at last won the day. In 1502 the marriage treaty with the Scot-King was formally concluded; and quiet, as Henry trusted, secured in the north.

The marriage of Margaret was to bring the House of Stuart at an after time to the English throne. But results as momentous and far more immediate followed on the marriage of Henry's sons From the outset of his reign Henry had been driven to seek the friendship and alliance of Spain. Though his policy to the last remained one of peace, yet the acquisition of Brittany forced him to guard against attack from France and the mastery of the Channel which the possession of the Breton ports was likely to give to the French fleet. The same dread of French attack drew Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabel of Castile, whose marriage was building up the new monarchy of Spain, to the side of the English King; and only a few years after his accession they offered the hand of their daughter Catharine for his eldest son. But the invasion of Italy by Charles the Eighth drew French ambition to a distant strife, and once delivered from the pressure of immediate danger Henry held warily back from a close connexion with the Spanish realms which might have involved him in continental wars. It was not till 1501 that the marriage-treaty was really carried out. The Low Countries had now passed to the son of Mary of Burgundy by her husband Maximilian, the Austrian Archduke Philip. The Yorkist sympathies of the Duchess Margaret were shared by Philip, and Flanders had till now been the starting-point of the pretenders who had threatened Henry's crown. But Philip's marriage with Juana, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabel, bound him to the cause of Spain, and it was to secure his throne by winning Philip's alliance, as well as to gain in the friendship of the Low Countries a fresh check upon French attack, that Henry yielded to Ferdinand's renewed demand for the union of Arthur and Catharine. The match was made in blood. Henry's own temper was merciful and even generous; he punished

rebellion for the most part by fines rather than bloodshed, and he had been content to imprison or degrade his rivals. But the Spanish ruthlessness would see no living claimant left to endanger Catharine's throne, and Perkin Warbeck and the Earl of Warwick were put to death on a charge of conspiracy before the landing of the bride.

CHAP. II.

The Revival of Learning.

1485.

1514.

Catharine however was widow almost as soon as wife, for only three months after his wedding Arthur sickened and died. But a contest with France for Southern Italy, which Ferdinand claimed as king of Aragon, now made the friendship of England more precious than ever to the Spanish sovereigns; and Isabel soon pressed for her daughter's union with the King's second son, Henry, whom his brother's death left heir to the throne. Strange as was such a proposal of marriage with a husband's brother, in his anxiety to avoid a breach with Spain the King suffered Henry to be betrothed to Catharine, and threw the burthen of decision on Rome. As he expected, Julius the Second declared that if the first marriage had been completed to allow the second was beyond even the Papal power. But the victories of Spain in Southern Italy enabled Isabel to put fresh pressure on the Pope, and on a denial being given of the consummation of the earlier marriage Julius was brought to sign a bull legitimating, even in case of such a consummation, the later one. Henry however still shrank from any real union. His aim was neither to complete the marriage, which would have alienated France, nor to wholly break it off and so alienate Spain. A balanced position between the two battling powers allowed him to remain at peace, to maintain an independent policy, and to pursue his system of home-government. He met the bull therefore by compelling his son to enter a secret protest against the validity of his betrothal; and Catharine remained through the later years of his reign at the English court betrothed but unmarried, sick with love-longing and baffled pride.

The Renascence.

But great as were the issues of Henry's policy, it shrinks

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. — 1485-1514. — into littleness if we turn from it to the weighty movements which were now stirring the minds of men. The world was passing through changes more momentous than any it had witnessed since the victory of Christianity and the fall of the Roman Empire. Its physical bounds were suddenly enlarged. The discoveries of Copernicus revealed to man the secret of the universe. Portuguese mariners doubled the Cape of Good Hope and anchored their merchant fleets in the harbours of India. Columbus crossed the untraversed ocean to add a New World to the Old. Sebastian Cabot, starting from the port of Bristol, threaded his way among the icebergs of Labrador This sudden contact with new lands, new faiths, new races of men quickened the slumbering intelligence of Europe into a strange curiosity. The first book of voyages that told of the Western World, the travels of Amerigo Vespucci, were soon "in every body's hands." The "Utopia" of More, in its wide range of speculation on every subject of human thought and action, tells us how roughly and utterly the narrowness and limitation of human life had been broken up. At the very hour when the intellectual energy of the Middle Ages had sunk into exhaustion the capture of Constantinople by the Turks and the flight of its Greek scholars to the shores of Italy opened anew the science and literature of an older world. The exiled Greek scholars were welcomed in Italy; and Florence, so long the home of freedom and of art, became the home of an intellectual Revival. The poetry of Homer, the drama of Sophocles, the philosophy of Aristotle and of Plato woke again to life beneath the shadow of the mighty dome with which Brunelleschi had just crowned the City by the Arno. All the restless energy which Florence had so long thrown into the cause of liberty she flung, now that her liberty was reft from her, into the cause of letters. The galleys of her merchants brought back manuscripts from the East as the most precious portion of their freight. In the palaces of her nobles fragments of classic sculpture ranged them-

selves beneath the frescoes of Ghirlandajo. The recovery of a treatise of Cicero's or a tract of Sallust's from the dust of a monastic library was welcomed by the group of statesmen and artists who gathered in the Rucellai gardens with a thrill of enthusiasm. Foreign scholars soon flocked over the Alps to learn Greek, the key of the new knowledge, from the Florentine teachers. Grocyn, a fellow of New College, was perhaps the first Englishman who studied under the Greek exile, Chancondylas; and the Greek lectures which he delivered in Oxford on his return in 1491 mark the opening of a new period in our history. Physical as well as literary activity awoke with the rediscovery of the teachers of Greece; and the continuous progress of English science may be dated from the day when Linacre, another Oxford student, returned from the lectures of the Florentine Politian to revive the older tradition of medicine by his translation of Galen.

John Colet

But from the first it was manifest that the revival of letters would take a tone in England very different from the tone it had taken in Italy, a tone less literary, less largely human, but more moral, more religious, more practical in its bearings both upon society and politics. The awakening of a rational Christianity, whether in England or in the Teutonic world at large, begins with the Italian studies of John Colet; and the vigour and earnestness of Colet were the best proof of the strength with which the new movement was to affect English religion. He came back to Oxford utterly untouched by the Platonic mysticism or the semi-serious infidelity which characterized the group of scholars round Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was hardly more influenced by their literary enthusiasm. The knowledge of Greek seems to have had one almost exclusive end for him, and this was a religious end. Greek was the key by which he could unlock the Gospels and the New Testament, and in these he thought that he could find a new religious standing-ground. It was this resolve of Colet to throw aside the traditional dogmas of his day and

to discover a rational and practical religion in the Gospels themselves which gave its peculiar stamp to the theology of the Renascence. His faith stood simply on a vivid realization of the person of Christ. In the prominence which such a view gave to the moral life, in his free criticism of the earlier Scriptures, in his tendency to simple forms of doctrine and confessions of faith, Colet struck the keynote of a mode of religious thought as strongly in contrast with that of the later Reformation as with that of Catholicism itself. The allegorical and mystical theology on which the Middle Ages had spent their intellectual vigour to such little purpose fell before his rejection of all but the historical and grammatical sense of the Biblical text. In his lectures on the Romans we find hardly a single quotation from the Fathers or the scholastic teachers. The great fabric of belief built up by the mediæval doctors seemed to him simply "the corruptions of the Schoolmen." In the life and sayings of its Founder he saw a simple and rational Christianity, whose fittest expression was the Apostles' creed. "About the rest," he said with characteristic impatience, "let divines dispute as they will." Of his attitude towards the coarser aspects of the current religion his behaviour at a later time before the famous shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury gives us a rough indication. As the blaze of its jewels, its costly sculptures, its elaborate metal-work burst on Colet's view, he suggested with bitter irony that a saint so lavish to the poor in his lifetime would certainly prefer that they should possess the wealth heaped round him since his death. With petulant disgust he rejected the rags of the martyr which were offered for his adoration and the shoe which was offered for his kiss. The earnestness, the religious zeal, the very impatience and want of sympathy with the past which we see in every word and act of the man burst out in the lectures on St. Paul's Epistles which he delivered at Oxford in 1496. Even to the most critical among his hearers he seemed "like one

inspired, raised in voice, eye, his whole countenance and mien, out of himself."

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

Erasmus.

Severe as was the outer life of the new teacher, a severity marked by his plain black robe and the frugal table which he preserved amidst his later dignities, his lively conversation, his frank simplicity, the purity and nobleness of his life, even the keen outbursts of his troublesome temper, endeared him to a group of scholars, foremost among whom stood Erasmus and Thomas More. "Greece has crossed the Alps," cried the exiled Argyropulos on hearing a translation of Thucydides by the German Reuchlin; but the glory, whether of Reuchlin or of the Teutonic scholars who followed him, was soon eclipsed by that of Erasmus. His enormous industry, the vast store of classical learning which he gradually accumulated, Erasmus shared with others of his day. In patristic study he may have stood beneath Luther; in originality and profoundness of thought he was certainly inferior to More. His theology, though he made a greater mark on the world by it than even by his scholarship, he derived almost without change from Colet. But his combination of vast learning with keen observation, of acuteness of remark with a lively fancy, of genial wit with a perfect good sense—his union of as sincere a piety and as profound a zeal for rational religion as Colet's with a dispassionate fairness towards older faiths, a large love of secular culture, and a genial freedom and play of mind—this union was his own, and it was through this that Erasmus embodied for the Teutonic peoples the quickening influence of the New Learning during the long scholar-life which began at Paris and ended amidst sorrow and darkness at Basle. At the time of Colet's return from Italy Erasmus was young and comparatively unknown, but the chivalrous enthusiasm of the new movement breaks out in his letters from Paris, whither he had wandered as a scholar. "I have given up my whole soul to Greek learning," he writes, "and as soon as I get any money I

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

shall buy Greek books—and then I shall buy some clothes." It was in despair of reaching Italy that the young scholar made his way in 1499 to Oxford, as the one place on this side the Alps where he would be enabled through the teaching of Grocyn to acquire a knowledge of Greek. But he had no sooner arrived there than all feeling of regret vanished away. "I have found in Oxford," he writes, "so much polish and learning that now I hardly care about going to Italy at all, save for the sake of having been there. When I listen to my friend Colet it seems like listening to Plato himself. Who does not wonder at the wide range of Grocyn's knowledge? What can be more searching, deep, and refined than the judgement of Linacre? When did Nature mould a temper more gentle, endearing, and happy than the temper of Thomas More?"

Revival of Letters.

But the new movement was far from being bounded by the walls of Oxford. The printing press was making letters the common property of all. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century ten thousand editions of books and pamphlets are said to have been published throughout Europe, the most important half of them of course in Italy. All the Latin authors were accessible to every student before the century closed. Almost all the more valuable authors of Greece were published in the twenty years that followed. The profound influence of this burst of the two great classic literatures on the world at once made itself felt. "For the first time," to use the picturesque phrase of M. Taine, "men opened their eyes and saw." The human mind seemed to gather new energies at the sight of the vast field which opened before it. It attacked every province of knowledge, and in a few years it transformed all. Experimental science, the science of philology, the science of politics, the critical investigation of religious truth, all took their origin from this Renascence—this "New Birth" of the world. Art, if it lost much in purity and propriety, gained in scope and in the fearlessness of its love of Nature. Literature, if

crushed for the moment by the overpowering attraction of the great models of Greece and Rome, revived with a grandeur of form, a large spirit of humanity, such as it has never known since their day. In England the influence of the new movement extended far beyond the little group in which it had a few years before seemed concentrated. The great churchmen became its patrons. Langton, Bishop of Winchester, took delight in examining the young scholars of his episcopal family every evening, and sent all the most promising of them to study across the Alps. Learning found a yet warmer friend in the Archbishop of Canterbury. CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1496-1514.

Warham. Immersed as Archbishop Warham was in the business of the state, he was no mere politician. The eulogies which Erasmus lavished on him while he lived, his praises of the Primate's learning, of his ability in business, his pleasant humour, his modesty, his fidelity to friends, may pass for what eulogies of living men are commonly worth. But it is difficult to doubt the sincerity of the glowing picture which he drew of him when death had destroyed all interest in mere adulation. The letters indeed which passed between the great churchman and the wandering scholar, the quiet, simple-hearted grace which amidst constant instances of munificence preserved the perfect equality of literary friendship, the enlightened piety to which Erasmus could address the noble words of his preface to St. Jerome, confirm the judgement of every good man of Warham's day. The Archbishop's life was a simple one; and an hour's pleasant reading, a quiet chat with some learned new comer, alone broke the endless round of civil and ecclesiastical business. Few men realized so thoroughly as Warham the new conception of an intellectual and moral equality before which the old social distinctions of the world were to vanish away. His favourite relaxation was to sup among a group of scholarly visitors, enjoying their fun and retorting with fun of his own. Colet, who had now become Dean of

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

St. Pauls and whose sermons were stirring all London, might often be seen with Grocyn and Linacre at the Primate's board. There too might probably have been seen Thomas More, who, young as he was, was already famous through his lectures at St. Lawrence on "The City of God." But the scholar-world found more than supper or fun at the Primate's board. His purse was ever open to relieve their poverty. "Had I found such a patron in my youth," Erasmus wrote long after, "I too might have been counted among the fortunate ones." It was with Grocyn that Erasmus on a second visit to England rowed up the river to Warham's board at Lambeth, and in spite of an unpromising beginning the acquaintance turned out wonderfully well. The Primate loved him, Erasmus wrote home, as if he were his father or his brother, and his generosity surpassed that of all his friends. He offered him a sinecure, and when he declined it he bestowed on him a pension of a hundred crowns a year. When Erasmus wandered to Paris it was Warham's invitation which recalled him to England When the rest of his patrons left him to starve on the sour beer of Cambridge it was Warham who sent him fifty angels. "I wish there were thirty legions of them," the Primate puns in his good-humoured way.

Henry the Eighth.

Real however as this progress was, the group of scholars who represented the New Learning in England still remained a little one through the reign of Henry the Seventh. But the King's death in 1509 wholly changed their position. A "New Order," to use their own enthusiastic phrase, dawned on them in the accession of his son. Henry the Eighth had hardly completed his eighteenth year when he mounted the throne; but his manly beauty, his bodily vigour, and skill in arms, seemed matched by a frank and generous temper and a nobleness of political aims. Pole, his bitterest enemy, owned in later days that at the beginning of his reign Henry's nature was one "from which all excellent things might have been hoped." Already in stature and strength a king among his fellows,

taller than any, bigger than any, a mighty wrestler, a mighty hunter, an archer of the best, a knight who bore down rider after rider in the tourney, the young monarch combined with this bodily lordliness a largeness and versatility of mind which was to be the special characteristic of the age that had begun. His fine voice, his love of music, his skill on lute or organ, the taste for poetry that made him delight in Surrey's verse, the taste for art which made him delight in Holbein's canvas, left room for tendencies of a more practical sort, for dabbling in medicine, or for a real skill in shipbuilding. There was a popular fibre in Henry's nature which made him seek throughout his reign the love of his people; and at its outset he gave promise of a more popular system of government by checking the extortion which had been practised under colour of enforcing forgotten laws, and by bringing his father's financial ministers, Empson and Dudley, to trial on a charge of treason. His sympathies were known to be heartily with the New Learning; he was a clever linguist, he had a taste that never left him for theological study, he was a fair scholar. Even as a boy of nine he had roused by his wit and attainments the wonder of Erasmus, and now that he mounted the throne the great scholar hurried back to England to pour out his exultation in the "Praise of Folly," a song of triumph over the old world of ignorance and bigotry that was to vanish away before the light and knowledge of the new reign. Folly in his amusing little book mounts a pulpit in cap and bells, and pelts with her satire the absurdities of the world around her, the superstition of the monk, the pedantry of the grammarian, the dogmatism of the doctors of the schools, the selfishness and tyranny of Kings.

Colet's School.

The irony of Erasmus was backed by the earnest effort of Colet. He seized the opportunity to commence the work of educational reform by devoting in 1510 his private fortune to the foundation of a Grammar School beside St. Pauls. The bent of its founder's mind was shown by the

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

image of the Child Jesus over the master's chair with the words "Hear ye Him" graven beneath it. "Lift up your little white hands for me," wrote the Dean to his scholars in words which prove the tenderness that lay beneath the stern outer seeming of the man,—"for me which prayeth for you to God." All the educational designs of the reformers were carried out in the new foundation The old methods of instruction were superseded by fresh grammars composed by Erasmus and other scholars for its use. Lilly, an Oxford student who had studied Greek in the East, was placed at its head. The injunctions of the founder aimed at the union of rational religion with sound learning, at the exclusion of the scholastic logic, and at the steady diffusion of the two classical literatures. The more bigoted of the clergy were quick to take alarm. "No wonder," More wrote to the Dean, "your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy." But the cry of alarm passed helplessly away Not only did the study of Greek creep gradually into the schools which existed, but the example of Colet was followed by a crowd of imitators. More grammar schools, it has been said, were founded in the latter years of Henry than in the three centuries before. The impulse only grew the stronger as the direct influence of the New Learning passed away. The grammar schools of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, in a word the system of middle-class education which by the close of the century had changed the very face of England, were the outcome of Colet's foundation of St. Pauls.

The Universities.

But the "armed Greeks" of More's apologue found a yet wider field in the reform of the higher education of the country. On the Universities the influence of the New Learning was like a passing from death to life. Erasmus gives us a picture of what happened in 1516 at Cambridge where he was himself for a time a teacher of Greek. "Scarcely thirty years ago nothing was taught

here but the *Parva Logicalia*, Alexander, those antiquated exercizes from Aristotle, and the *Quæstiones* of Scotus. As time went on better studies were added, mathematics, a new, or at any rate a renovated, Aristotle, and a knowledge of Greek literature. What has been the result? The University is now so flourishing that it can compete with the best universities of the age." William Latimer and Croke returned from Italy and carried on the work of Erasmus at Cambridge, where Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, himself one of the foremost scholars of the new movement, lent it his powerful support. At Oxford the Revival met with a fiercer opposition. The contest took the form of boyish frays, in which the youthful partizans and opponents of the New Learning took sides as Greeks and Trojans. The young King himself had to summon one of its fiercest enemies to Woodstock, and to impose silence on the tirades which were delivered from the University pulpit. The preacher alleged that he was carried away by the Spirit. "Yes," retorted the King, "by the spirit, not of wisdom, but of folly." But even at Oxford the contest was soon at an end. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, established the first Greek lecture there in his new college of Corpus Christi, and a Professorship of Greek was at a later time established by the Crown. "The students," wrote an eye-witness in 1520, "rush to Greek letters, they endure watching, fasting, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them." The work was crowned at last by the munificent foundation of Cardinal College, to share in whose teaching Wolsey invited the most eminent of the living scholars of Europe, and for whose library he promised to obtain copies of all the manuscripts in the Vatican.

Church Reform.

From the reform of education the New Learning pressed on to the reform of the Church. It was by Warham's commission that Colet was enabled in 1512 to address the Convocation of the Clergy in words which set before them with unsparing severity the religious ideal of the new movement. "Would that for once," burst forth the fiery

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. — 1485-1514.

preacher, "you would remember your name and profession and take thought for the reformation of the Church! Never was it more necessary, and never did the state of the Church need more vigorous endeavours." "We are troubled with heretics," he went on, "but no heresy of theirs is so fatal to us and to the people at large as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy. That is the worst heresy of all." It was the reform of the bishops that must precede that of the clergy, the reform of the clergy that would lead to a general revival of religion in the people at large. The accumulation of benefices, the luxury and worldliness of the priesthood, must be abandoned. The prelates ought to be busy preachers, to forsake the Court and labour in their own dioceses. Care should be taken for the ordination and promotion of worthy ministers, residence should be enforced, the low standard of clerical morality should be raised. It is plain that the men of the New Learning looked forward, not to a reform of doctrine but to a reform of life, not to a revolution which should sweep away the older superstitions which they despised but to a regeneration of spiritual feeling before which these superstitions would inevitably fade away. Colet was soon charged with heresy by the Bishop of London. Warham however protected him, and Henry to whom the Dean was denounced bade him go boldly on. "Let every man have his own doctor," said the young King after a long interview, "but this man is the doctor for me!"

Henry's Temper.

But for the success of the new reform, a reform which could only be wrought out by the tranquil spread of knowledge and the gradual enlightenment of the human conscience, the one thing needful was peace; and peace was already vanishing away. Splendid as were the gifts with which Nature had endowed Henry the Eighth, there lay beneath them all a boundless selfishness. "He is a prince," said Wolsey as he lay dying, "of a most royal courage; sooner than miss any part of his will he will endanger one

half of his kingdom, and I do assure you I have often kneeled to him, sometimes for three hours together, to persuade him from his appetite and could not prevail." It was this personal will and appetite that was in Henry the Eighth to shape the very course of English history, to override the highest interests of the state, to trample under foot the wisest counsels, to crush with the blind ingratitude of a fate the servants who opposed it. Even Wolsey, while he recoiled from the monstrous form which had revealed itself, could hardly have dreamed of the work which that royal courage and yet more royal appetite was to accomplish in the years to come. As yet however Henry was far from having reached the height of self-assertion which bowed all constitutional law and even the religion of his realm beneath his personal will. But one of the earliest acts of his reign gave an earnest of the part which the new strength of the crown was to enable an English king to play. Through the later years of Henry the Seventh Catharine of Aragon had been recognized at the English court simply as Arthur's widow and Princess Dowager of Wales. Her betrothal to Prince Henry was looked upon as cancelled by his protest, and though the King was cautious not to break openly with Spain by sending her home, he was resolute not to suffer a marriage which would bring a break with France and give Ferdinand an opportunity of dragging England into the strife between the two great powers of the west.

France.

But with the young King's accession this policy of cautious isolation was at once put aside. There were grave political reasons indeed for the quick resolve which bore down the opposition of counsellors like Warham. As cool a head as that of Henry the Seventh was needed to watch without panic the rapid march of French greatness. In mere extent France had grown with a startling rapidity since the close of her long strife with England. Guienne had fallen to Charles the Seventh. Provence, Rousillon, and the Duchy of Burgundy had

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485–1514.

successively swelled the realm of Lewis the Eleventh. Britanny had been added to that of Charles the Eighth. From Calais to Bayonne, from the Jura to the Channel, stretched a wide and highly organized realm, whose disciplined army and unrivalled artillery lifted it high above its neighbours in force of war. The efficiency of its army was seen in the sudden invasion and conquest of Italy while England was busy with the pretended Duke of York. The passage of the Alps by Charles the Eighth shook the whole political structure of Europe. In wealth, in political repute, in arms, in letters, in arts, Italy at this moment stood foremost among the peoples of Western Christendom, and the mastery which Charles won over it at a single blow lifted France at once above the states around her. Twice repulsed from Naples, she remained under the successor of Charles, Lewis the Twelfth, mistress of the Duchy of Milan and of the bulk of northern Italy; the princes and republics of central Italy grouped themselves about her; and at the close of Henry the Seventh's reign the ruin of Venice in the League of Cambray crushed the last Italian state which could oppose her designs on the whole peninsula. It was this new and mighty power, a France that stretched from the Atlantic to the Mincio, that fronted the young King at his accession and startled him from his father's attitude of isolation. He sought Ferdinand's alliance none the less that it meant war, for his temper was haughty and adventurous, his pride dwelt on the older claims of England to Normandy and Guienne, and his devotion to the papacy drew him to listen to the cry of Julius the Second and to long like a crusader to free Rome from the French pressure. Nor was it of less moment to a will such as the young King's that Catharine's passionate love for him had roused as ardent a love in return.

Ferdinand of Aragon.

Two months therefore after his accession the Infanta became the wife of Henry the Eighth. The influence of the King of Aragon became all powerful in the English council chamber. Catharine spoke of her husband and

herself as Ferdinand's subjects. The young King wrote that he would obey Ferdinand as he had obeyed his own father. His obedience was soon to be tested. Ferdinand seized on his new ally as a pawn in the great game which he was playing on the European chess-board, a game which left its traces on the political and religious map of Europe for centuries after him. It was not without good ground that Henry the Seventh faced so coolly the menacing growth of France. He saw what his son failed to see, that the cool, wary King of Aragon was building up as quickly a power which was great enough to cope with it, and that grow as the two rivals might they were matched too evenly to render England's position a really dangerous one. While the French Kings aimed at the aggrandizement of a country, Ferdinand aimed at the aggrandizement of a House. Through the marriage of their daughter and heiress Juana with the son of the Emperor Maximilian, the Archduke Philip, the blood of Ferdinand and Isabel had merged in that of the House of Austria, and the aim of Ferdinand was nothing less than to give to the Austrian House the whole world of the west Charles of Austria, the issue of Philip's marriage, had been destined from his birth by both his grandfathers, Maximilian and Ferdinand, to succeed to the Empire; Franche Comté and the state built up by the Burgundian Dukes in the Netherlands had already passed into his hands at the death of his father; the madness of his mother left him next heir of Castille; the death of Ferdinand would bring him Aragon and the dominion of the Kings of Aragon in southern Italy; that of Maximilian would add the Archduchy of Austria, with the dependencies in the south and its hopes of increase by the winning through marriage of the realms of Bohemia and Hungary. A share in the Austrian Archduchy indeed belonged to Charles's brother, the Archduke Ferdinand; but a kingdom in northern Italy would at once compensate Ferdinand for his abandonment of this

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

heritage and extend the Austrian supremacy over the Peninsula, for Rome and central Italy would be helpless in the grasp of the power which ruled at both Naples and Milan. A war alone could drive France from the Milanese, but such a war might be waged by a league of European powers which would remain as a check upon France, should she attempt to hinder this vast union of states in the hand of Charles or to wrest from him the Imperial Crown. Such a league, the Holy League as it was called from the accession to it of the Pope, Ferdinand was enabled to form at the close of 1511 by the kinship of the Emperor, the desire of Venice and Julius the Second to free Italy from the stranger, and the warlike temper of Henry the Eighth.

The Holy League.

Dreams of new Creçys and Agincourts roused the ardour of the young King; and the campaign of 1512 opened with his avowal of the old claims on his "heritage of France." But the subtle intriguer in whose hands he lay pushed steadily to his own great ends. The League drove the French from the Milanese. An English army which landed under the Marquis of Dorset at Fontarabia to attack Guienne found itself used as a covering force to shield Ferdinand's seizure of Navarre, the one road through which France could attack his grandson's heritage of Spain. The troops mutinied and sailed home, Scotland, roused again by the danger of France, threatened invasion; the world scoffed at Englishmen as useless for war. Henry's spirit however rose with the need. In 1513 he landed in person in the north of France, and a sudden rout of the French cavalry in an engagement near Guinegate, which received from its bloodless character the name of the Battle of the Spurs, gave him the fortresses of Terouenne and Tournay. A victory yet more decisive awaited his arms at home. A Scotch army crossed the border, with James the Fourth at its head; but on the ninth of September it was met by an English force under the Earl of Surrey at Flodden in Northumberland. James "fell near his banner," and his

army was driven off the field with heavy loss. Flushed with this new glory the young King was resolute to continue the war when in the opening of 1514 he found himself left alone by the dissolution of the League. Ferdinand had gained his ends, and had no mind to fight longer simply to realize the dreams of his son-in-law. Henry had indeed gained much. The might of France was broken. The Papacy was restored to freedom. England had again figured as a great power in Europe. But the millions left by his father were exhausted, his subjects had been drained by repeated subsidies, and, furious as he was at the treachery of his Spanish ally, Henry was driven to conclude a peace.

Protest of the New Learning.

To the hopes of the New Learning this sudden outbreak of the spirit of war, this change of the monarch from whom they had looked for a "new order" into a vulgar conqueror, proved a bitter disappointment. Colet thundered from the pulpit of St. Pauls that "an unjust peace is better than the justest war," and protested that 'when men out of hatred and ambition fight with and destroy one another, they fight under the banner, not of Christ, but of the Devil." Erasmus quitted Cambridge with a bitter satire against the "madness" around him. "It is the people," he said, in words which must have startled his age,—"it is the people who build cities, while the madness of princes destroys them." The sovereigns of his time appeared to him like ravenous birds pouncing with beak and claw on the hard-won wealth and knowledge of mankind. "Kings who are scarcely men," he exclaimed in bitter irony, "are called 'divine;' they are 'invincible' though they fly from every battle-field; 'serene' though they turn the world upside down in a storm of war; 'illustrious' though they grovel in ignorance of all that is noble; 'Catholic' though they follow anything rather than Christ. Of all birds the Eagle alone has seemed to wise men the type of royalty, a bird neither beautiful nor musical nor good for food, but murderous, greedy, hateful to all, the curse of all, and with

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

its great powers of doing harm only surpassed by its desire to do it." It was the first time in modern history that religion had formally dissociated itself from the ambition of princes and the horrors of war, or that the new spirit of criticism had ventured not only to question but to deny what had till then seemed the primary truths of political order.

The Jerome of Erasmus.

But the indignation of the New Learning was diverted to more practical ends by the sudden peace. However he had disappointed its hopes, Henry still remained its friend. Through all the changes of his terrible career his home was a home of letters. His boy, Edward the Sixth, was a fair scholar in both the classical languages. His daughter Mary wrote good Latin letters. Elizabeth began every day with an hour's reading in the Greek Testament, the tragedies of Sophocles, or the orations of Demosthenes. The ladies of the court caught the royal fashion and were found poring over the pages of Plato. Widely as Henry's ministers differed from each other, they all agreed in sharing and fostering the culture around them. The panic of the scholar-group therefore soon passed away. Colet toiled on with his educational efforts; Erasmus forwarded to England the works which English liberality was enabling him to produce abroad. Warham extended to him as generous an aid as the protection he had afforded to Colet. His edition of the works of St Jerome had been begun under the Primate's encouragement during the great scholar's residence at Cambridge, and it appeared with a dedication to the Archbishop on its title-page. That Erasmus could find protection in Warham's name for a work which boldly recalled Christendom to the path of sound Biblical criticism, that he could address him in words so outspoken as those of his preface, shows how fully the Primate sympathized with the highest efforts of the New Learning. Nowhere had the spirit of enquiry so firmly set itself against the claims of authority. "Synods and decrees, and even councils," wrote Erasmus, "are by

no means in my judgement the fittest modes of repressing error, unless truth depend simply on authority. But on the contrary, the more dogmas there are, the more fruitful is the ground in producing heresies. Never was the Christian faith purer or more undefiled than when the world was content with a single creed, and that the shortest creed we have." It is touching even now to listen to such an appeal of reason and of culture against the tide of dogmatism which was soon to flood Christendom with Augsburg Confessions and Creeds of Pope Pius and Westminster Catechisms and Thirty-nine Articles.

CHAP. II. — The Revival of Learning. — 1485–1514.

The New Testament of Erasmus.

But the principles which Erasmus urged in his "Jerome" were urged with far greater clearness and force in a work that laid the foundation of the future Reformation, the edition of the Greek Testament on which he had been engaged at Cambridge and whose production was almost wholly due to the encouragement and assistance he received from English scholars. In itself the book was a bold defiance of theological tradition. It set aside the Latin version of the Vulgate which had secured universal acceptance in the Church. Its method of interpretation was based, not on received dogmas, but on the literal meaning of the text. Its real end was the end at which Colet had aimed in his Oxford lectures. Erasmus desired to set Christ himself in the place of the Church, to recall men from the teaching of Christian theologians to the teaching of the Founder of Christianity. The whole value of the Gospels to him lay in the vividness with which they brought home to their readers the personal impression of Christ himself. "Were we to have seen him with our own eyes, we should not have so intimate a knowledge as they give us of Christ, speaking, healing, dying, rising again, as it were in our very presence." All the superstitions of mediæval worship faded away in the light of this personal worship of Christ. "If the footprints of Christ are shown us in any place, we kneel down and adore them. Why do we not rather venerate the living and breathing picture of him in these

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485. 1514.

books? We deck statues of wood and stone with gold and gems for the love of Christ. Yet they only profess to represent to us the outer form of his body, while these books present us with a living picture of his holy mind." In the same way the actual teaching of Christ was made to supersede the mysterious dogmas of the older ecclesiastical teaching. "As though Christ taught such subtleties," burst out Erasmus. "subtleties that can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians—or as though the strength of the Christian religion consisted in man's ignorance of it! It may be the safer course," he goes on with characteristic irony, "to conceal the state mysteries of kings, but Christ desired his mysteries to be spread abroad as openly as was possible." In the diffusion, in the universal knowledge of the teaching of Christ the foundation of a reformed Christianity had still, he urged, to be laid. With the tacit approval of the Primate of a Church which from the time of Wyclif had held the translation and reading of the Bible in the common tongue to be heresy and a crime punishable with the fire, Erasmus boldly avowed his wish for a Bible open and intelligible to all "I wish that even the weakest woman might read the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. I wish that they were translated into all languages, so as to be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Saracens and Turks But the first step to their being read is to make them intelligible to the reader. I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the tune of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey" From the moment of its publication in 1516 the New Testament of Erasmus became the topic of the day; the Court, the Universities, every household to which the New Learning had penetrated, read and discussed it. But bold as its language may have seemed, Warham not only expressed his approbation, but lent the work—as he

wrote to its author—"to bishop after bishop." The most influential of his suffragans, Bishop Fox of Winchester, declared that the mere version was worth ten commentaries; one of the most learned, Fisher of Rochester, entertained Erasmus at his house.

Chap. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

More.

Daring and full of promise as were these efforts of the New Learning in the direction of educational and religious reform, its political and social speculations took a far wider range in the "Utopia" of Thomas More. Even in the household of Cardinal Morton, where he had spent his childhood, More's precocious ability had raised the highest hopes. "Whoever may live to see it," the grey-haired statesman used to say, "this boy now waiting at table will turn out a marvellous man." We have seen the spell which his wonderful learning and the sweetness of his temper threw at Oxford over Colet and Erasmus; and young as he was, More no sooner quitted the University than he was known throughout Europe as one of the foremost figures in the new movement. The keen, irregular face, the grey restless eye, the thin mobile lips, the tumbled brown hair, the careless gait and dress, as they remain stamped on the canvas of Holbein, picture the inner soul of the man, his vivacity, his restless, all-devouring intellect, his keen and even reckless wit, the kindly, half-sad humour that drew its strange veil of laughter and tears over the deep, tender reverence of the soul within. In a higher, because in a sweeter and more loveable form than Colet, More is the representative of the religious tendency of the New Learning in England. The young law-student who laughed at the superstition and asceticism of the monks of his day wore a hair shirt next his skin, and schooled himself by penances for the cell he desired among the Carthusians. It was characteristic of the man that among all the gay, profligate scholars of the Italian Renascence he chose as the object of his admiration the disciple of Savonarola, Pico di Mirandola. Free-thinker as the bigots who listened to his daring

CHAP II. — The Revival of Learning. — 1485-1514. —

speculations termed him, his eye would brighten and his tongue falter as he spoke with friends of heaven and the after-life. When he took office, it was with the open stipulation "first to look to God, and after God to the King." In his outer bearing indeed there was nothing of the monk or recluse. The brightness and freedom of the New Learning seemed incarnate in the young scholar with his gay talk, his winsomeness of manner, his reckless epigrams, his passionate love of music, his omnivorous reading, his paradoxical speculations, his gibes at monks, his schoolboy fervour of liberty. But events were soon to prove that beneath this sunny nature lay a stern inflexibility of conscientious resolve. The Florentine scholars penned declamations against tyrants while they covered with their flatteries the tyranny of the house of Medici. More no sooner entered Parliament in 1504 than his ready argument and keen sense of justice led to the rejection of the demand for a heavy subsidy. "A beardless boy," said the courtiers,—and More was only twenty-six,—"has disappointed the King's purpose," and during the rest of Henry the Seventh's reign the young lawyer found it prudent to withdraw from public life. But the withdrawal had little effect on his buoyant activity. He rose at once into repute at the bar. He wrote his "Life of Edward the Fifth," the first work in which what we may call modern English prose appears written with purity and clearness of style and a freedom either from antiquated forms of expression or classical pedantry. His ascetic dreams were replaced by the affections of home. It is when we get a glimpse of him in his house at Chelsea that we understand the endearing epithets which Erasmus always lavishes upon More. The delight of the young husband was to train the girl he had chosen for his wife in his own taste for letters and for music. The reserve which the age exacted from parents was thrown to the winds in More's intercourse with his children. He loved teaching them, and lured them to their deeper studies by the coins and

curiosities he had gathered in his cabinet. He was as fond of their pets and their games as his children themselves, and would take grave scholars and statesmen into the garden to see his girls' rabbit-hutches or to watch the gambols of their favourite monkey. "I have given you kisses enough," he wrote to his little ones in merry verse when far away on political business, "but stripes hardly ever."

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

The Utopia.

The accession of Henry the Eighth drew More back into the political current. It was at his house that Erasmus penned the "Praise of Folly," and the work, in its Latin title, "Moriæ Encomium," embodied in playful fun his love of the extravagant humour of More. He was already in Henry's favour; he was soon called to the royal court and used in the King's service. But More "tried as hard to keep out of court," says his descendant, "as most men try to get into it." When the charm of his conversation gave so much pleasure to the young sovereign "that he could not once in a month get leave to go home to his wife or children, whose company he much desired, . . . he began thereupon to dissemble his nature, and so, little by little, from his former mirth to dissemble himself." He shared to the full the disappointment of his friends at the sudden outbreak of Henry's warlike temper, but the Peace again brought him to Henry's side and he was soon in the King's confidence both as a counsellor and as a diplomatist. It was on one of his diplomatic missions that More describes himself as hearing news of the Kingdom of "Nowhere." "On a certain day when I had heard mass in Our Lady's Church, which is the fairest, the most gorgeous and curious church of building in all the city of Antwerp and also most frequented of people, and service being over I was ready to go home to my lodgings, I chanced to espy my friend Peter Gilles talking with a certain stranger, a man well stricken in age, with a black sun-burnt face, a large beard, and a cloke cast trimly about his shoulders, whom by his favour and apparell forthwith I judged to be a

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

mariner." The sailor turned out to have been a companion of Amerigo Vespucci in those voyages to the New World "that be now in print and abroad in every man's hand," and on More's invitation he accompanied him to his house, and "there in my garden upon a bench covered with green turves we sate down, talking together" of the man's marvellous adventures, his desertion in America by Vespucci, his wanderings over the country under the equinoctial line, and at last of his stay in the Kingdom of "Nowhere."

It was the story of "Nowhere," or Utopia, which More began in 1515 to embody in the wonderful book which reveals to us the heart of the New Learning. As yet the movement had been one of scholars and divines. Its plans of reform had been almost exclusively intellectual and religious. But in More the same free play of thought which had shaken off the old forms of education and faith turned to question the old forms of society and politics. From a world where fifteen hundred years of Christian teaching had produced social injustice, religious intolerance, and political tyranny the humourist philosopher turned to a "Nowhere" in which the mere efforts of natural human virtue realized those ends of security, equality, brotherhood, and freedom for which the very institution of society seemed to have been framed. It is as he wanders through this dreamland of the new reason that More touches the great problems which were fast opening before the modern world, problems of labour, of crime, of conscience, of government. Merely to have seen and to have examined questions such as these would prove the keenness of his intellect, but its far-reaching originality is shown in the solutions which he proposes. Amidst much that is the pure play of an exuberant fancy, much that is mere recollection of the dreams of bygone dreamers, we find again and again the most important social and political discoveries of later times anticipated by the genius of Thomas More.

In some points, such as his treatment of the question of

Labour and Health.

Labour, he still remains far in advance of current opinion. The whole system of society around him seemed to him "nothing but a conspiracy of the rich against the poor." Its economic legislation from the Statute of Labourers to the statutes by which the Parliament of 1515 strove to fix a standard of wages was simply the carrying out of such a conspiracy by process of law. "The rich are ever striving to pare away something further from the daily wages of the poor by private fraud and even by public law, so that the wrong already existing (for it is a wrong that those from whom the State derives most benefit should receive least reward) is made yet greater by means of the law of the State." "The rich devise every means by which they may in the first place secure to themselves what they have amassed by wrong, and then take to their own use and profit at the lowest possible price the work and labour of the poor. And so soon as the rich decide on adopting these devices in the name of the public, then they become law." The result was the wretched existence to which the labour class was doomed, "a life so wretched that even a beast's life seems enviable." No such cry of pity for the poor, of protest against the system of agrarian and manufacturing tyranny which found its expression in the Statute-book had been heard since the days of Piers Ploughman. But from Christendom More turns with a smile to "Nowhere." In "Nowhere" the aim of legislation is to secure the welfare, social, industrial, intellectual, religious, of the community at large, and of the labour-class as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth. The end of its labour-laws was simply the welfare of the labourer. Goods were possessed indeed in common, but work was compulsory with all. The period of toil was shortened to the nine hours demanded by modern artizans, and the object of this curtailment was the intellectual improvement of the worker. "In the institution of the weal public this end is only and chiefly pretended and minded that what time may possibly be spared from the necessary occupations and

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1493-1514.

affairs of the commonwealth, all that the citizens should withdraw from bodily service to the free liberty of the mind and garnishing of the same. For herein they conceive the felicity of this life to consist." A public system of education enabled the Utopians to avail themselves of their leisure. While in England half of the population could read no English, every child was well taught in "Nowhere." The physical aspects of society were cared for as attentively as its moral. The houses of Utopia "in the beginning were very low and like homely cottages or poor shepherd huts made at all adventures of every rude piece of timber that came first to hand, with mud walls and ridged roofs thatched over with straw." The picture was really that of the common English town of More's day, the home of squalor and pestilence. In Utopia however they had at last come to realize the connexion between public morality and the health which springs from light, air, comfort, and cleanliness. "The streets were twenty feet broad; the houses backed by spacious gardens, and, curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with their stories one after another. The outsides of the walls be made either of hard flint, or of plaster, or else of brick; and the inner sides be well strengthened by timber work. The roofs be plain and flat, covered over with plaster, so tempered that no fire can hurt or perish it, and withstanding the violence of the weather better than lead. They keep the wind out of their windows with glass, for it is there much used, and sometimes also with fine linen cloth dipped in oil or amber, and that for two commodities, for by this means more light cometh in and the wind is better kept out."

Crime.

The same foresight which appears in More's treatment of the questions of Labour and the Public Health is yet more apparent in his treatment of the question of Crime. He was the first to suggest that punishment was less effective in suppressing it than prevention. "If you allow your people to be badly taught, their morals to be corrupted from child-

hood, and then when they are men punish them for the very crimes to which they have been trained in childhood—what is this but to make thieves, and then to punish them?" He was the first to plead for proportion between the punishment and the crime, and to point out the folly of the cruel penalties of his day. "Simple theft is not so great an offence as to be punished with death." If a thief and a murderer are sure of the same penalty, More shows that the law is simply tempting the thief to secure his theft by murder. "While we go about to make thieves afraid, we are really provoking them to kill good men." The end of all punishment he declares to be reformation, "nothing else but the destruction of vice and the saving of men." He advises "so using and ordering criminals that they cannot choose but be good, and what harm soever they did before, the residue of their lives to make amends for the same." Above all he urges that to be remedial punishment must be wrought out by labour and hope, so that "none is hopeless or in despair to recover again his former state of freedom by giving good tokens and likelihood of himself that he will ever after that live a true and honest man." It is not too much to say that in the great principles More lays down he anticipated every one of the improvements in our criminal system which have distinguished the last hundred years.

Religion.

His treatment of the religious question was even more in advance of his age. If the houses of Utopia were strangely in contrast with the halls of England, where the bones from every dinner lay rotting in the dirty straw which strewed the floor, where the smoke curled about the rafters, and the wind whistled through the unglazed windows; if its penal legislation had little likeness to the gallows which stood out so frequently against our English sky; the religion of "Nowhere" was in yet stronger conflict with the faith of Christendom. It rested simply on nature and reason. It held that God's design was the happiness of man, and that the ascetic rejection of human

CHAP. II. The Revival of Learning. 1485-1514.

delights, save for the common good, was thanklessness to the Giver. Christianity indeed had already reached Utopia, but it had few priests; religion found its centre rather in the family than in the congregation: and each household confessed its faults to its own natural head. A yet stranger characteristic was seen in the peaceable way in which it lived side by side with the older religions. More than a century before William of Orange More discerned and proclaimed the great principle of religious toleration. In "Nowhere" it was lawful to every man to be of what religion he would. Even the disbelievers in a Divine Being or in the immortality of man, who by a single exception to its perfect religious indifference were excluded from public office, were excluded, not on the ground of their religious belief, but because their opinions were deemed to be degrading to mankind and therefore to incapacitate those who held them from governing in a noble temper. But they were subject to no punishment, because the people of Utopia were "persuaded that it is not in a man's power to believe what he list." The religion which a man held he might propagate by argument, though not by violence or insult to the religion of others. But while each sect performed its rites in private, all assembled for public worship in a spacious temple, where the vast throng, clad in white, and grouped round a priest clothed in fair raiment wrought marvellously out of birds' plumage, joined in hymns and prayers so framed as to be acceptable to all. The importance of this public devotion lay in the evidence it afforded that liberty of conscience could be combined with religious unity.

Political Liberty.

But even more important than More's defence of religious freedom was his firm maintenance of political liberty against the monarchy. Steady and irresistible as was the growth of the royal power, it was far from seeming to the keenest political thinker of that day so natural and inevitable a developement of our history as it seems to

some writers in our own. In political hints which lie scattered over the whole of the Utopia More notes with a bitter irony the advance of the new despotism. It was only in "Nowhere" that a sovereign was "removeable on suspicion of a design to enslave his people." In England the work of slavery was being quietly wrought, hints the great lawyer, through the law. "There will never be wanting some pretence for deciding in the king's favour; as that equity is on his side, or the strict letter of the law, or some forced interpretation of it: or if none of these, that the royal prerogative ought with conscientious judges to outweigh all other considerations." We are startled at the precision with which More describes the processes by which the law courts were to lend themselves to the advance of tyranny till their crowning judgement in the case of ship-money But behind these judicial expedients lay great principles of absolutism, which partly from the example of foreign monarchies, partly from the sense of social and political insecurity, and yet more from the isolated position of the Crown, were gradually winning their way in public opinion. "These notions"—More goes boldly on in words written, it must be remembered, within the precincts of Henry's court and beneath the eye of Wolsey—"these notions are fostered by the maxim that the king can do no wrong, however much he may wish to do it; that not only the property but the persons of his subjects are his own; and that a man has a right to no more than the king's goodness thinks fit not to take from him." It is only in the light of this emphatic protest against the king-worship which was soon to override liberty and law that we can understand More's later career. Steady to the last in his loyalty to Parliaments, as steady in his resistance to mere personal rule, it was with a smile as fearless as the smile with which he penned the half-jesting words of his Utopia that he sealed them with his blood on Tower Hill.

CHAPTER III.

WOLSEY.

1514—1529.

Wolsey's rise.

"THERE are many things in the Commonwealth of Nowhere that I rather wish than hope to see embodied in our own." It was with these words of characteristic irony that More closed the first work which embodied the dreams of the New Learning. Destined as they were to fulfilment in the course of ages, its schemes of social, religious, and political reform broke in fact helplessly against the temper of the time. At the moment when More was pleading the cause of justice between rich and poor social discontent was being fanned by new exactions and sterner laws into a fiercer flame. While he was advocating toleration and Christian comprehension Christendom stood on the verge of a religious strife which was to rend it for ever in pieces. While he aimed sarcasm after sarcasm at king-worship the new despotism of the Monarchy was being organized into a vast and all-embracing system by the genius of Thomas Wolsey. Wolsey was the son of a wealthy townsman of Ipswich whose ability had raised him into notice at the close of the preceding reign, and who had been taken by Bishop Fox into the service of the Crown. The activity which he showed in organizing and equipping the royal army for the campaign of 1513 won for him a foremost place in the confidence of Henry the Eighth. The young King lavished dignities on him with a profusion that marked the completeness of his trust. From the pos

of royal almoner he was advanced in 1513 to the see of Tournay. At the opening of 1514 he became bishop of Lincoln; at its close he was translated to the archbishoprick of York. In 1515 Henry procured from Rome his elevation to the office of cardinal and raised him to the post of chancellor. So quick a rise stirred envy in the men about him; and his rivals noted bitterly the songs, the dances, and carousals which had won, as they believed, the favour of the king. But sensuous and worldly as was Wolsey's temper, his powers lifted him high above the level of a court favourite. His noble bearing, his varied ability, his enormous capacity for toil, the natural breadth and grandeur of his mind, marked him naturally out as the minister of a king who showed throughout his reign a keen eye for greatness in the men about him. CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

Wolsey's policy.

Wolsey's mind was European rather than English; it dwelt little on home affairs but turned almost exclusively to the general politics of the European powers and of England as one of them. Whatever might be Henry's disappointment in the issue of his French campaigns the young King might dwell with justifiable pride on the general result of his foreign policy. If his direct gains from the Holy League had been little, he had at any rate won security on the side of France. The loss of Navarre and of the Milanese left Lewis a far less dangerous neighbour than he had seemed at Henry's accession, while the appearance of the Swiss soldiery during the war of the League destroyed the military supremacy which France had enjoyed from the days of Charles the Eighth. But if the war had freed England from the fear of French pressure Wolsey was as resolute to free her from the dictation of Ferdinand, and this the resentment of Henry at his unscrupulous desertion enabled him to bring about. Crippled as she was, France was no longer formidable as a foe; and her alliance would not only break the supremacy of Ferdinand over English policy but secure Henry on his northern border. Her husband's death at Flodden and the infancy

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

of their son raised Margaret Tudor to the Scotch regency, and seemed to promise Henry a hold on his troublesome neighbours. But her marriage a year later with the Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas, soon left the Regent powerless among the factions of warring nobles. She appealed to her brother for aid, while her opponents called on the Duke of Albany, the son of the Albany who had been driven to France in 1484 and heir to the crown after the infant king, to return and take the regency. Albany held broad lands in France; he had won fame as a French general; and Scotland in his hands would be simply a means of French attack. A French alliance not only freed Henry from dependence on Ferdinand but would meet this danger from the north; and in the summer of 1514 a treaty was concluded with the French King and ratified by his marriage with Henry's youngest sister, Mary Tudor.

Francis the First.

The treaty was hardly signed when the death of Lewis in January 1515 undid this marriage and placed his young cousin, Francis the First, upon the throne. But the old king's death brought no change of policy. Francis at once prepared to renew the war in Italy, and for this purpose he needed the friendship of his two neighbours in the west and the north, Henry and the ruler of the Netherlands, the young Charles of Austria. Both were willing to give their friendship. Charles, jealous of Maximilian's desire to bring him into tutelage, looked to a French alliance as a security against the pressure of the Emperor, while Henry and Wolsey were eager to despatch Francis on a campaign across the Alps, which would at any rate while it lasted remove all fear of an attack on England. A yet stronger ground in the minds of both Charles and Henry for facilitating the French King's march was their secret belief that his invasion of the Milanese would bring the young king to inevitable ruin, for the Emperor and Ferdinand of Aragon were leagued with every Italian state against Francis, and a Swiss army prepared to dispute with him the possession of the Milanese. Charles therefore

betrothed himself to the French King's sister, and Henry concluded a fresh treaty with him in the spring of 1515. But the dreams of both rulers were roughly broken. Francis succeeded both in crossing the Alps and in beating the Swiss army. His victory in the greatest battle of the age, the battle of Marignano, at once gave him the Milanese and laid the rest of Italy at his feet The work of the Holy Alliance was undone, and the dominion which England had dreaded in the hands of Lewis the Twelfth was restored in the younger and more vigorous hands of his successor. Neither the King nor the Cardinal could hide their chagrin when the French minister announced his master's victory, but it was no time for an open breach. All Wolsey could do was to set himself secretly to hamper the French King's work. English gold hindered any reconciliation between France and the Swiss, and enabled Maximilian to lead a joint army of Swiss and Imperial soldiers in the following year over the Alps.

Charles the Fifth.

But the campaign broke down. At this juncture indeed the death of Ferdinand in January 1516 changed the whole aspect of European politics. It at once opened to Charles of Austria his Spanish and Neapolitan heritage. The presence of the young King was urgently called for by the troubles that followed in Castile, and Charles saw that peace was needed for the gathering into his hands of realms so widely scattered as his own. Maximilian too was ready to set aside all other aims to secure the aggrandizement of his house. After an inactive campaign therefore the Emperor negotiated secretly with France, and the treaty of Noyon which Charles concluded with Francis in August 1516 was completed in March 1517 by the accession of Maximilian to their alliance in the Treaty of Cambray. To all outer seeming the Treaty of Cambray left Francis supreme in the west, unequalled in military repute, a soldier who at twenty had withstood and broken the league of all Europe in arms, master of the Milanese, and through his

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

alliances with Venice, Florence, and the Pope virtually master of all Italy save the Neapolitan realm. On the other hand the treaty left England exposed and alone, should France choose this moment for attack. Francis was well aware of Wolsey's efforts against him, and the state of Scotland offered the ready means of bringing about a quarrel. While Henry, anxious as he was to aid his sister, was fettered by the fear that English intervention would bring French intervention in its train and endanger the newly concluded alliance, Albany succeeded in evading the English cruizers and landing in the May of 1515. He was at once declared Protector of the realm by the Parliament at Edinburgh. Margaret on the other hand was driven into Stirling, and after a short siege forced to take refuge in England. The influence of Albany and the French party whom he headed secured for Francis in any struggle the aid of Scotland. But neither Henry nor his minister really dreaded danger from the Treaty of Cambray; on the contrary it solved all their difficulties. So well did they understand the aim of Charles in concluding it that they gave him the gold which enabled him to reach Spain. Master of Castile and Aragon, of Naples and the Netherlands, the Spanish King rose into a check on the French monarchy such as the policy of Henry or Wolsey had never been able to construct before. Instead of towering over Europe, Francis found himself confronted in the hour of his pride by a rival whom he was never to overcome; while England, deserted and isolated as she seemed for the moment, was eagerly sought in alliance by both princes. In October 1518 Francis strove to bind her to his cause by a new treaty of peace, in which England sold Tournay to France and the hand of the French dauphin was promised to Henry's daughter Mary, now a child of two years old.

Wolsey's greatness.

At the close of 1518 therefore the policy of Wolsey seemed justified by success. He had found England a power of the second order, overawed by France and dictated to

by Ferdinand of Spain. She now stood in the forefront of European affairs, a state whose alliance was desired alike by French King and Spanish King, and which dealt on equal terms with Pope or Emperor. In European cabinets Wolsey was regarded as hardly less a power to be conciliated than his royal master. Both Charles and Francis sought his friendship; and in the years which followed his official emoluments were swelled by pensions from both princes. At home the King loaded him with new proofs of favour. The revenues of two sees whose tenants were foreigners fell into his hands; he held the bishoprick of Winchester and the abbacy of St. Albans. He spent this vast wealth with princely ostentation. His pomp was almost royal. A train of prelates and nobles followed him as he moved; his household was composed of five hundred persons of noble birth, and its chief posts were occupied by knights and barons of the realm. Two of the houses he built, Hampton Court and York House, the later Whitehall, were splendid enough to serve at his fall as royal palaces. Nor was this magnificence a mere show of power. The whole direction of home and foreign affairs rested with Wolsey alone. His toil was ceaseless. The morning was for the most part given to his business as chancellor in Westminster Hall and at the Star-Chamber; but nightfall still found him labouring at exchequer business or home administration, managing Church affairs, unravelling the complexities of Irish misgovernment, planning schools and colleges, above all drawing and studying despatches and transacting the whole diplomatic correspondence of the state. Greedy as was his passion for toil, Wolsey felt the pressure of this enormous mass of business, and his imperious tones, his angry outbursts of impatience showed him to be overworked. Even his vigorous frame gave way. Still a strong and handsome man in 1518 at the age of forty-seven, Wolsey was already an old man, broken by disease, when he fell from power at fifty-five. But enormous as was the mass of work which he undertook, it

CHAP. III.
Wolsey.
1514-1529.

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

was thoroughly done. His administration of the royal treasury was rigidly economical. The number of his despatches is hardly less remarkable than the care he bestowed on each. Even More, an avowed enemy, owns that as Chancellor he surpassed all men's expectations. The court of Chancery indeed became so crowded through the character for expedition and justice which it gained under his rule that subordinate courts had to be created for its relief.

Concentration of secular and ecclesiastical power.

But not even with this concentration of authority in a single hand was Henry content. At the close of 1517 he procured from the Pope the Cardinal's appointment as Legate *a latere* in the realm. Such a Legate was entrusted with powers almost as full as those of the Pope himself; his jurisdiction extended over every bishop and priest, it overrode every privilege or exemption of abbey or cell, while his court superseded that of Rome as the final court of ecclesiastical appeal for the realm. Already wielding the full powers of secular justice in his capacity of Chancellor and of president of the royal Council, Wolsey wielded the full power of spiritual justice in his capacity of Legate. His elevation was no mere freak of royal favour; it was the result of a distinct policy. The moment had come when the Monarchy was to gather up all government into the personal grasp of the King. The checks which had been imposed on the action of the sovereign by the presence of great prelates and lords at his council were practically removed. His fellow councillors learned to hold their peace when the haughty minister "clapped his rod on the board." The restraints of public justice were equally done away. Even the distant check of Rome was gone. All secular, all ecclesiastical power was summed up in a single hand. It was this concentration of authority in Wolsey which accustomed England to a system of personal government under Henry and his successors. It was the Cardinal's long tenure of the whole Papal authority within the realm, and the consequent suspension of appeals to Rome, that led men to acquiesce

at a later time in Henry's own claim of religious supremacy. For proud as was Wolsey's bearing and high as were his natural powers he stood before England as the mere creature of the King. Greatness, wealth, authority he held, and owned, he held, simply at the royal will. In raising his low-born favourite to the head of church and state Henry was gathering all religious as well as all civil authority into his personal grasp. The nation which trembled before Wolsey learned to tremble before the master who could destroy Wolsey with a breath.

Rivalry of Charles and Francis.

The rise of Charles of Austria gave a new turn to Wolsey's policy. Till now France had been a pressing danger, and the political scheme both of Henry and his minister lay in organizing leagues to check her greatness or in diverting her activity to the fields of Lombardy. But from the moment of Ferdinand's death this power of Francis was balanced by the power of Charles. Possessor of the Netherlands, of Franche Comté, of Spain, Charles already pressed France on its northern, eastern, and southern borders when the death of his grandfather Maximilian in the spring of 1519 added to his dominions the heritage of the House of Austria in Swabia and on the Danube. It did yet more for him in opening to him the Empire. The intrigues of Maximilian had secured for Charles promises of support from a majority of the Electors, and though Francis redoubled his efforts and Henry the Eighth sent an envoy to push his own succession the cry of Germany for a German head carried all before it. In June 1519 Charles was elected Emperor; and France saw herself girt in on every side by a power whose greed was even greater than her own. For, boy of nineteen as he was, Charles from the first moment of his rule meant to make himself master of the world; and France, thrown suddenly on the defensive, nerved herself for the coming struggle. Both needed the gold and friendship of England. Convinced as he was of Henry's treachery in the Imperial election, where the

English sovereign had promised Francis his support, the French King clung to the alliance which Wolsey in his uncertainty as to the actual drift of Charles had concluded in 1518, and pressed for an interview with Henry himself. But the need of France had woke dreams of more than mere safety or a balanced neutrality in Wolsey and his master. The time seemed come at last for a bolder game. The claim on the French crown had never been waived; the dream of recovering at least Guienne and Normandy still lived on in the hearts of English statesmen; and the subtle, unscrupulous youth who was now planning his blow for the mastery of the world knew well how to seize upon dreams such as these. Nor was Wolsey forgotten. If Henry coveted France, his minister coveted no less a prize than the Papacy; and the young Emperor was lavish of promises of support in any coming election. The result of his seductions was quickly seen. While Henry deferred the interview with Francis till the summer of 1520, Charles had already planned a meeting with his uncle in the opening of the year.

League with Charles.

What importance Charles attached to this meeting was seen in his leaving Spain ablaze with revolt behind him to keep his engagement. He landed at Dover in the end of May, and King and Emperor rode alone to Canterbury, but of the promises or pledges which passed we know little save from the after-course of English politics. Nothing could have differed more vividly from this simple ride than the interview with Francis which followed in June. A camp of three hundred white tents surrounded a faery palace with gilded posterns and brightly coloured oriels which rose like a dream from the barren plain of Guisnes, its walls hung with tapestry, its roof embossed with roses, its golden fountain spouting wine over the greensward. But all this pomp and splendour, the chivalrous embraces and tourneys of the Kings, the gorgeous entry of Wolsey in his crimson robe on a mule trapped with gold, the fresh treaty which ratified the alliance, hardly veiled the new

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

English purpose. *A second interview between Charles and his uncle as he returned from the meeting with Francis* ended in a secret confederacy of the two sovereigns and the promise of the Emperor to marry his cousin, Henry's one child, Mary Tudor. With her hand passed the heritage of the English Crown. Henry had now ceased to hope for a son from Catharine, and Mary was his destined successor. Her right to the throne was asserted by a deed which proved how utterly the baronage now lay at the mercy of the King. The Duke of Buckingham stood first in blood as in power among the English nobles; he was the descendant of Edward the Third's youngest son, and if Mary's succession were denied he stood heir to the throne. His hopes had been fanned by prophets and astrologers, and wild words told his purpose to seize the Crown on Henry's death in defiance of every opponent. But word and act had for two years been watched by the King; and in 1521 the Duke was arrested, condemned as a traitor by his peers, and beheaded on Tower Hill. His blood was a pledge of Henry's sincerity which Charles could not mistake. Francis on the other hand had never for a moment been deceived by the profuse assurances of friendship which the King and Wolsey lavished on him. A revolt of the Spanish towns offered a favourable opportunity for an attack on his rival, and a French army passed over the Pyrenees into Navarre while Francis himself prepared to invade the Netherlands. Both princes appealed for aid under their separate treaties to Henry; and the English sovereign, whom the quick stroke of the French had taken by surprize, could only gain time by a feigned mediation in which Wolsey visited both Emperor and King. But at the close of the year England was at last ready for action, and Wolsey's solemn decision that Francis was the aggressor was followed in November by a secret league which was concluded at Calais between the Pope, the Emperor, and Henry.

The conquest of the Milanese by the imperial generals

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529. *Benevolences.*

turned at this moment the balance of the war, and as the struggle went on the accession of Venice and the lesser Italian republics, of the King of Hungary and Ferdinand of Austria, to whom Charles had ceded his share in the hereditary duchy of their house, to the alliance for the recovery of Italy from the French, threatened ruin to the cause of Francis. In real power however the two combatants were still fairly matched. If she stood alone, France was rich and compact, while her opponents were scattered, distracted by warring aims, and all equally poor. The wealth which had given Henry his weight in the counsels of Europe at the opening of his reign had been exhausted by his earlier wars, and Wolsey's economy had done nothing more than tide the crown through the past years of peace. But now that Henry had promised to raise forty thousand men for the coming campaign the ordinary resources of the treasury were utterly insufficient. With the instinct of despotism Wolsey shrank from reviving the tradition of the Parliament. Though Henry had thrice called the Houses together to supply the expenses of his earlier struggle with France his minister had governed through seven years of peace without once assembling them War made a Parliament inevitable, but for a while Wolsey strove to delay its summons by a wide extension of the practice which Edward the Fourth had invented of raising money by forced loans or "Benevolences," to be repaid from the first subsidy of a coming Parliament. Large sums were assessed upon every county. Twenty thousand pounds were exacted from London, and its wealthier citizens were summoned before the Cardinal and required to give an account of the value of their estates. Commissioners were sent into each shire for the purposes of assessment, and precepts were issued on their information, requiring in some cases supplies of soldiers, in others a tenth of a man's income, for the King's service. So poor however was the return that the Earl of Surrey, who was sent as general to Calais, could muster only a force

of seventeen thousand men; and while Charles succeeded in driving the French from Milan, the English campaign dwindled into a mere raid upon Picardy, from which the army fell back, broken with want and disease.

Wolsey and the Parliament.

The Cardinal was driven to call the Estates together in April 1523; and the conduct of the Commons showed how little the new policy of the Monarchy had as yet done to change the temper of the nation or to break its loyalty to the tradition of constitutional freedom. Wolsey needed the sum of eight hundred thousand pounds, and proposed to raise it by a property tax of twenty per cent. Such a demand was unprecedented, but the Cardinal counted on his presence to bear down all opposition, and made the demand in person. He was received with obstinate silence. It was in vain that he called on member after member to answer; and his appeal to More, who had been elected to fill the chair of the House of Commons, was met by the Speaker's falling on his knees and representing his powerlessness to reply till he had received instructions from the House itself. The effort to overawe the Commons had in fact failed, and Wolsey was forced to retire. He had no sooner withdrawn than an angry debate began, and the Cardinal returned to answer the objections which were raised to the subsidy. But the Commons again foiled the minister's attempt to influence their deliberations by refusing to discuss the matter in his presence. The struggle continued for a fortnight; and though successful in procuring a grant the court party were forced to content themselves with less than half of Wolsey's original demand The Church displayed as independent a spirit. Wolsey's aim of breaking down constitutional traditions was shown, as in the case of the Commons, by his setting aside the old assembly of the provincial convocations, and as Legate summoning the clergy to meet in a national synod. But the clergy held as stubbornly to constitutional usage as the laity, and the Cardinal was forced to lay his demand before them in their separate convocations. Even here however

CHAP. III. — Wolsey. — 1514–1529.

the enormous grant he asked was disputed for four months, and the matter had at last to be settled by a compromise.

War with France.

It was plain that England was far from having sunk to a slavish submission to the monarchy. But galled as Wolsey was by the resistance, his mind was too full of vast schemes of foreign conquest to turn to any resolute conflict with opposition at home. The treason of the Duke of Bourbon stirred a new hope of conquering France. Bourbon was Constable of France, the highest of the French nobles both from his blood and the almost independent power he wielded in his own duchy and in Provence. But a legal process by which Francis sought to recall his vast possessions to the domain of the crown threatened him with ruin; and driven to secret revolt, he pledged himself to rise against the King on the appearance of the allied armies in the heart of the realm. His offer was eagerly accepted, and so confident were the conspirators of success that they at once settled the division of their spoil. To Henry his hopes seemed at last near their realization; and while Burgundy fell naturally to Charles, his ally claimed what remained of France and the French crown. The departure of Francis with his army for Italy was to be the signal for the execution of the scheme, a joint army of English and Imperialists advancing to Bourbon's aid from the north while a force of Spaniards and Germans marched to the same point from the south. As the French troops moved to the Alps a German force penetrated in August into Lorraine, an English army disembarked at Calais, and a body of Spaniards descended from the Pyrenees. But at the moment of its realization the discovery of the plot and an order for his arrest foiled Bourbon's designs; and his precipitate flight threw these skilful plans into confusion. Francis remained in his realm. Though the army which he sent over the Alps was driven back from the walls of Milan it still held to Piedmont, while the allied force in northern France under the command of the Duke of Suffolk advanced to the Oise only to find itself un-

supported and to fall hastily back, and the slow advance of the Spaniards frustrated the campaign in Guienne. In Scotland alone a gleam of success lighted on the English arms. At the close of the former war Albany had withdrawn to France and Margaret regained her power; but a quarrel both with her husband and the English King brought the Queen-mother herself to invite the Duke to return. On the outbreak of the new struggle with Francis Henry at once insisted on his withdrawal, and though Albany marched on England with a large and well-equipped army, the threats of the English commander so wrought on him that he engaged to disband it and fled over sea. Henry and his sister drew together again; and Margaret announced that her son, James the Fifth, who had now reached his twelfth year, assumed the government as King, while Lord Surrey advanced across the border to support her against the French party among the nobles. But the presence of an English army roused the whole people to arms. Albany was recalled; and Surrey saw himself forced to retreat while the Duke with sixty thousand men crossed the border and formed the siege of Wark. But again his cowardice ruined all. No sooner did Surrey, now heavily reinforced, advance to offer battle than Albany fell back to Lauder. Laying down the regency he set sail for France, and the resumption of her power by Margaret relieved England from its dread of a Scotch attack.

Henry and Charles.

Baffled as he had been, Henry still clung to his schemes of a French crown; and the defeat of the French army in Lombardy in 1524, the evacuation of Italy, and the advance of the Imperialist troops into France itself revived his hopes of success. Unable to set an army on foot in Picardy, he furnished the Emperor with supplies which enabled his troops to enter the south. But the selfish policy of Charles was at once shown by the siege of Marseilles. While Henry had gained nothing from the alliance Charles had gained the Milanese, and he was now preparing by the conquest of Provence and the Mediterranean

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

coast to link his possessions in Italy with his possessions in Spain. Such a project was more practical and statesmanlike than the visions of a conquest of France; but it was not to further the Emperor's greatness that England had wasted money and men. Henry felt that he was tricked as he had been tricked in 1523. Then as now it was clearly the aim of Charles to humble Francis, but not to transfer the French crown to his English ally. Nor was the resentment of Wolsey at the Emperor's treachery less than that of the King. At the death of Leo the Tenth, as at the death of his successor, Charles had fulfilled his pledge to the Cardinal by directing his party in the Sacred College to support his choice. But secret directions counteracted the open ones; and Wolsey had seen the tutor of the Emperor, Adrian the Sixth, and his partizan, Clement the Seventh, successively raised to the papal chair. The eyes of both King and minister were at last opened, and Henry drew cautiously from his ally, suspending further payments to Bourbon's army, and opening secret negotiations with France. But the face of affairs was changed anew by the obstinate resistance of Marseilles, the ruin and retreat of the Imperialist forces, and the sudden advance of Francis with a new army over the Alps. Though Milan was saved from his grasp, the Imperial troops were surrounded and besieged in Pavia. For three months they held stubbornly out, but famine at last forced them to a desperate resolve; and in February 1525, at a moment when the French army was weakened by the despatch of forces to Southern Italy, a sudden attack of the Imperialists ended in a crushing victory. The French were utterly routed and Francis himself remained a prisoner in the hands of the conquerors. The ruin as it seemed of France roused into fresh life the hopes of the English King. Again drawing closely to Charles he offered to join the Emperor in an invasion of France with forty thousand men, to head his own forces, and to furnish heavy subsidies for the cost of the war. Should the

allies prove successful and Henry be crowned King of France, he pledged himself to cede to Bourbon Dauphiny and his duchy, to surrender Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc to the Emperor, and to give Charles the hand of his daughter, Mary, and with it the heritage of two crowns which would in the end make him master of the world.

Resistance to Benevolences.

Though such a project seemed hardly perhaps as possible to Wolsey as to his master it served to test the sincerity of Charles in his adhesion to the alliance But whether they were in earnest or no in proposing it, King and minister had alike to face the difficulty of an empty treasury. Money was again needed for action, but to obtain a new grant from parliament was impossible, nor was Wolsey eager to meet fresh rebuffs from the spirit of the Commons or the clergy. He was driven once more to the system of Benevolences. In every county a tenth was demanded from the laity and a fourth from the clergy by the royal commissioners. But the demand was met by a general resistance. The political instinct of the nation discerned as of old that in the question of self-taxation was involved that of the very existence of freedom. The clergy put themselves in the forefront of the opposition, and preached from every pulpit that the commission was contrary to the liberties of the realm and that the King could take no man's goods but by process of law. Archbishop Warham, who was pressing the demand in Kent, was forced to write to the court that "there was sore grudging and murmuring among the people." "If men should give their goods by a commission," said the Kentish squires, "then it would be worse than the taxes of France, and England should be bond, not free." So stirred was the nation that Wolsey bent to the storm and offered to rely on the voluntary loans of each subject. But the statute of Richard the Third which declared all exaction of Benevolences illegal was recalled to memory; the demand was evaded

CHAP. III. *by London, and the Commissioners were driven out of*

Wolsey.

1514—1529.

Kent. A revolt actually broke out among the weavers of Suffolk; the men of Cambridge banded for resistance; the Norwich clothiers, though they yielded at first, soon threatened to rise. "Who is your captain?" the Duke of Norfolk asked the crowd. "His name is Poverty," was the answer, "for he and his cousin Necessity have brought us to this doing." There was in fact a general strike of the employers. Clothmakers discharged their workers, farmers put away their servants "They say the King asketh so much that they be not able to do as they have done before this time." Such a peasant insurrection as was raging in Germany was only prevented by the unconditional withdrawal of the royal demand.

End of the Austrian Alliance.

The check was too rough a one not to rouse both Wolsey and the King. Henry was wroth at the need of giving way before rebels, and yet more wroth at the blow which the strife had dealt to the popularity on which he set so great a store. Wolsey was more keenly hurt by the overthrow of his hopes for a decisive campaign. Without money it was impossible to take advantage of the prostration of France or bring the Emperor to any serious effort for its subjection and partition. But Charles had no purpose in any case of playing the English game, or of carrying out the pledges by which he had lured England into war. He concluded an armistice with his prisoner, and used Wolsey's French negotiations in the previous year as a ground for evading fulfilment of his stipulations. The alliance was in fact at an end; and the schemes of winning anew "our inheritance of France," had ended in utter failure. So sharp a blow could hardly fail to shake Wolsey's power. The popular clamour against him on the score of the Benevolences found echoes at court; and it was only by a dexterous gift to Henry of his newly-built palace at Hampton Court that Wolsey again won his old influence over the King. Buried indeed as both Henry and his minister were in schemes of distant

ambition, the sudden and general resistance of England woke them to an uneasy consciousness that their dream of uncontrolled authority was yet to find hindrances in the temper of the people they ruled. And at this moment a new and irresistible power began to quicken the national love of freedom and law. It was the influence of religion which was destined to ruin the fabric of the Monarchy; and the year which saw the defeat of the Crown in its exaction of Benevolences saw the translation of the English Bible.

CHAP. III.
Wolsey.
1514—1529.

Luther.

While Charles and Francis were struggling for the lordship of the world, Germany had been shaken by the outburst of the Reformation. "That Luther has a fine genius!" laughed Leo the Tenth when he heard in 1517 that a German Professor had nailed some Propositions denouncing the abuse of Indulgences, or of the Papal power to remit certain penalties attached to the commission of sins, against the doors of a church at Wittemberg. But the "Quarrel of Friars," as the controversy was termed contemptuously at Rome, soon took larger proportions. If at the outset Luther flung himself "prostrate at the feet" of the Papacy and owned its voice as the voice of Christ, the sentence of Leo no sooner confirmed the doctrine of Indulgences than their opponent appealed to a future Council of the Church. In 1520 the rupture was complete. A Papal Bull formally condemned the errors of the Reformer, and Luther publicly consigned the Bull to the flames. A second condemnation expelled him from the bosom of the Church, and the ban of the Empire was soon added to that of the Papacy. Charles the Fifth had bought Leo's alliance with himself and England by a promise of repressing the new heresy; and its author was called to appear before him in a Diet at Worms. "Here stand I; I can none other," Luther replied to the young Emperor as he pressed him to recant; and from a hiding-place in the Thuringian forest where he was sheltered after his condemnation by the Elector

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

of Saxony he denounced not merely, as at first, the abuses of the Papacy, but the Papacy itself. The heresies of Wyclif were revived; the infallibility, the authority of the Roman See, the truth of its doctrines, the efficacy of its worship, were denied and scoffed at in vigorous pamphlets which issued from his retreat and were dispersed throughout the world by the new printing-press. Germany welcomed them with enthusiasm Its old resentment against the oppression of Rome, the moral revolt in its more religious minds against the secularity and corruption of the Church, the disgust of the New Learning at the superstition which the Papacy now formally protected, combined to secure for Luther a widespread popularity and the protection of the northern princes of the Empire.

Luther and the New Learning.

In England his protest seemed at first to find no echo The King himself was both on political and religious grounds firm on the Papal side. England and Rome were drawn to a close allianceby the identity of their political position. Each was hard pressed between the same great powers; Rome had to hold its own between the masters of southern and the masters of northern Italy, as England had to hold her own between the rulers of France and of the Netherlands. From the outset of his reign to the actual break with Clement the Seventh the policy of Henry is always at one with that of the Papacy. Nor were the king's religious tendencies hostile to it. He was a trained theologian and proud of his theological knowledge, but to the end his convictions remained firmly on the side of the doctrines which Luther denied. In 1521 therefore he entered the lists against Luther with an "Assertion of the Seven Sacraments" for which he was rewarded by Leo with the title of "Defender of the Faith." The insolent abuse of the Reformer's answer called More and Fisher into the field. The influence of the New Learning was now strong at the English Court. Colet and Grocyn were among its foremost preachers; Linacre was Henry's physician; More was a privy councillor; Pace was one of the Secretaries of State;

Tunstall was Master of the Rolls. And as yet the New Learning, though scared by Luther's intemperate language, had steadily backed him in his struggle. Erasmus pleaded for him with the Emperor. Ulrich von Hutten attacked the friars in satires and invectives as violent as his own. But the temper of the Renascence was even more antagonistic to the temper of Luther than that of Rome itself. From the golden dream of a new age wrought peaceably and purely by the slow progress of intelligence, the growth of letters, the developement of human virtue, the Reformer of Wittemberg turned away with horror. He had little or no sympathy with the new culture. He despised reason as heartily as any Papal dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration or comprehension. He had been driven by a moral and intellectual compulsion to declare the Roman system a false one, but it was only to replace it by another system of doctrine just as elaborate, and claiming precisely the same infallibility. To degrade human nature was to attack the very base of the New Learning; and his attack on it called the foremost of its teachers to the field But Erasmus no sooner advanced to its defence than Luther declared man to be utterly enslaved by original sin and incapable through any efforts of his own of discovering truth or of arriving at goodness. Such a doctrine not only annihilated the piety and wisdom of the classic past, from which the New Learning had drawn its larger views of life and of the world; it trampled in the dust reason itself, the very instrument by which More and Erasmus hoped to regenerate both knowledge and religion. To More especially, with his keener perception of its future effect, this sudden revival of a purely theological and dogmatic spirit, severing Christendom into warring camps and ruining all hopes of union and tolerance, was especially hateful. The temper which hitherto had seemed so "endearing, gentle, and happy," suddenly gave way.

CHAP. III. — Wolsey. — 1514-1529. — *Tyndale.*

His reply to Luther's attack upon the King sank to the level of the work it answered; and though that of Bishop Fisher was calmer and more argumentative the divorce of the New Learning from the Reformation seemed complete.

But if the world of scholars and thinkers stood aloof from the new movement it found a warmer welcome in the larger world where men are stirred rather by emotion than by thought. There was an England of which even More and Colet knew little in which Luther's words kindled a fire that was never to die. As a great social and political movement Lollardry had ceased to exist, and little remained of the directly religious impulse given by Wyclif beyond a vague restlessness and discontent with the system of the Church. But weak and fitful as was the life of Lollardry the prosecutions whose records lie scattered over the bishops' registers failed wholly to kill it. We see groups meeting here and there to read "in a great book of heresy all one night certain chapters of the Evangelists in English," while transcripts of Wyclif's tracts passed from hand to hand. The smouldering embers needed but a breath to fan them into flame, and the breath came from William Tyndale. Born among the Cotswolds when Bosworth Field gave England to the Tudors, Tyndale passed from Oxford to Cambridge to feel the full impulse given by the appearance there of the New Testament of Erasmus. From that moment one thought was at his heart. He "perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue." "If God spare my life," he said to a learned controversialist, "ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou dost." But he was a man of forty before his dream became fact. Drawn from his retirement in Gloucestershire by the news of Luther's protest at Wittemberg, he found shelter for a year with a London Alderman, Humfrey Monmouth. "He

studied most part of the day at his book" said his host afterwards, "and would eat but sodden meat by his good will and drink but small single beer." The book at which he studied was the Bible. But it was soon needful to quit England if his purpose was to hold. "I understood at the last not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." From Hamburg, where he took refuge in 1524, he probably soon found his way to the little town which had suddenly become the sacred city of the Reformation. Students of all nations were flocking there with an enthusiasm which resembled that of the Crusades. "As they came in sight of the town," a contemporary tells us, "they returned thanks to God with clasped hands, for from Wittemberg, as heretofore from Jerusalem, the light of evangelical truth had spread to the utmost parts of the earth."

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

Translation of the Bible.

Such a visit could only fire Tyndale to face the "poverty, exile, bitter absence from friends, hunger and thirst and cold, great dangers, and innumerable other hard and sharp fightings," which the work he had set himself was to bring with it. In 1525 his version of the New Testament was completed, and means were furnished by English merchants for printing it at Köln. But Tyndale had soon to fly with his sheets to Worms, a city whose Lutheran tendencies made it a safer refuge, and it was from Worms that six thousand copies of the New Testament were sent in 1526 to English shores. The King was keenly opposed to a book which he looked on as made "at the solicitation and instance of Luther;" and even the men of the New Learning from whom it might have hoped for welcome were estranged from it by its Lutheran origin. We can only fairly judge their action by viewing it in the light of the time. What Warham and More saw over sea might well have turned them from a movement which seemed breaking down the very foundations of religion and society. Not only was the fabric of

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

the Church rent asunder and the centre of Christian unity denounced as "Babylon," but the reform itself seemed passing into anarchy. Luther was steadily moving onward from the denial of one Catholic dogma to that of another; and what Luther still clung to his followers were ready to fling away. Carlstadt was denouncing the reformer of Wittemberg as fiercely as Luther himself had denounced the Pope, and meanwhile the religious excitement was kindling wild dreams of social revolution, and men stood aghast at the horrors of a Peasant-War which broke out in Southern Germany. It was not therefore as a mere translation of the Bible that Tyndale's work reached England. It came as a part of the Lutheran movement, and it bore the Lutheran stamp in its version of ecclesiastical words "Church" became "congregation," "priest" was changed into "elder" It came too in company with Luther's bitter invectives and reprints of the tracts of Wyclif, which the German traders of the Steelyard were importing in large numbers. We can hardly wonder that More denounced the book as heretical, or that Warham ordered it to be given up by all who possessed it.

Wolsey and Lutheranism.

Wolsey took little heed of religious matters, but his policy was one of political adhesion to Rome, and he presided over a solemn penance to which some Steelyard men submitted in St. Pauls. "With six and thirty abbots, mitred priors, and bishops, and he in his whole pomp mitred" the Cardinal looked on while "great baskets full of books . . . were commanded after the great fire was made before the Rood of Northen," the crucifix by the great north door of the cathedral, "thus to be burned, and those heretics to go thrice about the fire and to cast in their fagots" But scenes and denunciations such as these were vain in the presence of an enthusiasm which grew every hour. "Englishmen" says a scholar of the time "were so eager for the gospel as to affirm that they would buy a New Testament even if they had to give a hundred thousand pieces of money for it." Bibles and pamphlets were

smuggled over to England and circulated among the poorer and trading classes through the agency of an association of "Christian Brethren," consisting principally of London tradesmen and citizens, but whose missionaries spread over the country at large. They found their way at once to the Universities, where the intellectual impulse given by the New Learning was quickening religious speculation. Cambridge had already won a name for heresy; Barnes, one of its foremost scholars, had to carry his fagot before Wolsey at St. Pauls; two other Cambridge teachers, Bilney and Latimer, were already known as "Lutherans." The Cambridge scholars whom Wolsey introduced into Cardinal College which he was founding spread the contagion through Oxford. A group of "Brethren" was formed in Cardinal College for the secret reading and discussion of the Epistles; and this soon included the more intelligent and learned scholars of the University. It was in vain that Clark, the centre of this group, strove to dissuade fresh members from joining it by warnings of the impending dangers. "I fell down on my knees at his feet," says one of them, Anthony Dalaber, "and with tears and sighs besought him that for the tender mercy of God he should not refuse me, saying that I trusted verily that he who had begun this on me would not forsake me, but would give me grace to continue therein to the end. When he heard me say so he came to me, took me in his arms, and kissed me, saying, 'The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do, and from henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ.'"

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

Latimer.

In 1528 the excitement which followed on this rapid diffusion of Tyndale's works forced Wolsey to more vigorous action; many of the Oxford Brethren were thrown into prison and their books seized. But in spite of the panic of the Protestants, some of whom fled over sea, little severity was really exercized. Henry's chief anxiety indeed was lest in the outburst against heresy the interest of the New Learning should suffer harm.

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

This was remarkably shown in the protection he extended to one who was destined to eclipse even the fame of Colet as a popular preacher. Hugh Latimer was the son of a Leicestershire yeoman, whose armour the boy had buckled on in Henry the Seventh's days ere he set out to meet the Cornish insurgents at Blackheath field. Latimer has himself described the soldierly training of his youth. "My father was delighted to teach me to shoot with the bow. He taught me how to draw, how to lay my body to the bow, not to draw with strength of arm as other nations do but with the strength of the body." At fourteen he was at Cambridge, flinging himself into the New Learning which was winning its way there with a zeal that at last told on his physical strength. The ardour of his mental efforts left its mark on him in ailments and enfeebled health from which, vigorous as he was, his frame never wholly freed itself. But he was destined to be known not as a scholar, but as a preacher. In his addresses from the pulpit the sturdy good sense of the man shook off the pedantry of the schools as well as the subtlety of the theologian. He had little turn for speculation, and in the religious changes of the day we find him constantly lagging behind his brother reformers. But he had the moral earnestness of a Jewish prophet, and his denunciations of wrong had a prophetic directness and fire. "Have pity on your soul," he cried to Henry, "and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed by your sword." His irony was yet more telling than his invective. "I would ask you a strange question;" he said once at Paul's Cross to a ring of Bishops, "who is the most diligent prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing of his office? I will tell you. It is the Devil! of all the pack of them that have cure, the Devil shall go for my money; for he ordereth his business. Therefore, you unpreaching prelates, learn of the Devil to be diligent in your office. If you will not learn of God, for shame

learn of the Devil." But Latimer was far from limiting himself to invective. His homely humour breaks in with story and apologue; his earnestness is always tempered with good sense; his plain and simple style quickens with a shrewd mother-wit. He talks to his hearers as a man talks to his friends, telling stories such as we have given of his own life at home, or chatting about the changes and chances of the day with a transparent simplicity and truth that raises even his chat into grandeur. His theme is always the actual world about him, and in his simple lessons of loyalty, of industry, of pity for the poor, he touches upon almost every subject from the plough to the throne. No such preaching had been heard in England before his day, and with the growth of his fame grew the danger of persecution. There were moments when, bold as he was, Latimer's heart failed him. "If I had not trust that God will help me," he wrote once, "I think the ocean sea would have divided my Lord of London and me by this day." A citation for heresy at last brought the danger home. "I intend," he wrote with his peculiar medley of humour and pathos, "to make merry with my parishioners this Christmas, for all the sorrow, lest perchance I may never return to them again." But he was saved throughout by the steady protection of the Court. Wolsey upheld him against the threats of the Bishop of Ely; Henry made him his own chaplain; and the King's interposition at this critical moment forced Latimer's judges to content themselves with a few vague words of submission.

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

Anne Boleyn.

What really sheltered the reforming movement was Wolsey's indifference to all but political matters. In spite of the foundation of Cardinal College in which he was now engaged, and of the suppression of some lesser monasteries for its endowment, the men of the New Learning looked on him as really devoid of any interest in the revival of letters or in their hopes of a general enlightenment. He took hardly more heed of the new Lutheranism.

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

His mind had no religious turn, and the quarrel of faiths was with him simply one factor in the political game which he was carrying on and which at this moment became more complex and absorbing than ever. The victory of Pavia had ruined that system of balance which Henry the Seventh and in his earlier days Henry the Eighth had striven to preserve. But the ruin had not been to England's profit, but to the profit of its ally. While the Emperor stood supreme in Europe Henry had won nothing from the war, and it was plain that Charles meant him to win nothing He set aside all projects of a joint invasion; he broke his pledge to wed Mary Tudor and married a princess of Portugal; he pressed for a peace with France which would give him Burgundy. It was time for Henry and his minister to change their course. They resolved to withdraw from all active part in the rivalry of the two powers. In June, 1525, a treaty was secretly concluded with France. But Henry remained on fair terms with the Emperor; and though England joined the Holy League for the deliverance of Italy from the Spaniards which was formed between France, the Pope, and the lesser Italian states on the release of Francis in the spring of 1526 by virtue of a treaty which he at once repudiated, she took no part in the lingering war which went on across the Alps. Charles was too prudent to resent Henry's alliance with his foes, and from this moment the country remained virtually at peace. No longer spurred by the interest of great events, the King ceased to take a busy part in foreign politics, and gave himself to hunting and sport. Among the fairest and gayest ladies of his court stood Anne Boleyn. She was sprung of a merchant family which had but lately risen to distinction through two great marriages, that of her grandfather with the heiress of the Earls of Ormond, and that of her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, with a sister of the Duke of Norfolk. It was probably through his kinship with the Duke, who was

now Lord Treasurer and high in the King's confidence, that Boleyn was employed throughout Henry's reign in state business, and his diplomatic abilities had secured his appointment as envoy both to France and to the Emperor. His son, George Boleyn, a man of culture and a poet, was among the group of young courtiers in whose society Henry took most pleasure. Anne was his youngest daughter; born in 1507, she was still but a girl of fifteen when the outbreak of war drew her from a stay in France to the English court. Her beauty was small, but her bright eyes, her flowing hair, her gaiety and wit, soon won favour with the King, and only a month after her return in 1522 the grant of honours to her father marked her influence over Henry. Fresh gifts in the following years showed that the favour continued; but in 1524 a new colour was given to this intimacy by a resolve on the King's part to break his marriage with the Queen. Catharine had now reached middle age; her personal charms had departed. The death of every child save Mary may have woke scruples as to the lawfulness of a marriage on which a curse seemed to rest; the need of a male heir for public security may have deepened this impression. But whatever were the grounds of his action we find Henry from this moment pressing the Roman see to grant him a divorce.

The Divorce.

It is probable that the matter was already mooted in 1525, a year which saw new proof of Anne's influence in the elevation of Sir Thomas Boleyn to the baronage as Lord Rochford. It is certain that it was the object of secret negotiation with the Pope in 1526. No sovereign stood higher in the favour of Rome than Henry, whose alliance had ever been ready in its distress and who was even now prompt with aid in money. But Clement's consent to his wish meant a break with the Emperor, Catharine's nephew; and the exhaustion of France, the weakness of the league in which the lesser Italian states strove to maintain their independence against Charles after the

CHAP. III.

Wolsey.

1514-1529.

battle of Pavia, left the Pope at the Emperor's mercy. While the English envoy was mooting the question of divorce in 1526 the surprize of Rome by an Imperial force brought home to Clement his utter helplessness. It is hard to discover what part Wolsey had as yet taken in the matter or whether as in other cases Henry had till now been acting alone, though the Cardinal himself tells us that on Catharine's first discovery of the intrigue she attributed the proposal of divorce to "my procurement and setting forth." But from this point his intervention is clear. As legate he took cognizance of all matrimonial causes, and in May 1527 a collusive action was brought in his court against Henry for cohabiting with his brother's wife. The King appeared by proctor; but the suit was suddenly dropped. Secret as were the proceedings, they had now reached Catharine's ear; and as she refused to admit the facts on which Henry rested his case her appeal would have carried the matter to the tribunal of the Pope, and Clement's decision could hardly be a favourable one.

Wolsey and the Divorce.

The Pope was now in fact a prisoner in the Emperor's hands. At the very moment of the suit Rome was stormed and sacked by the army of the Duke of Bourbon "If the Pope's holiness fortune either to be slain or taken," Wolsey wrote to the King when the news of this event reached England, "it shall not a little hinder your Grace's affairs." But it was needful for the Cardinal to find some expedient to carry out the King's will, for the group around Anne were using her skilfully for their purposes. A great party had now gathered to her support. Her uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, an able and ambitious man, counted on her rise to set him at the head of the council-board; the brilliant group of young courtiers to which her brother belonged saw in her success their own elevation; and the Duke of Suffolk with the bulk of the nobles hoped through her means to bring about the ruin of the statesman before whom they trembled. What most served their plans was the growth of Henry's passion. "If it please you,"

the King wrote at this time to Anne Boleyn, "to do the office of a true, loyal mistress, and give yourself body and heart to me, who have been and mean to be your loyal servant, I promise you not only the name but that I shall make you my sole mistress, remove all others from my affection, and serve you only." What stirred Henry's wrath most was Catharine's "stiff and obstinate" refusal to bow to his will. Wolsey's advice that "your Grace should handle her both gently and doulcely" only goaded Henry's impatience. He lent an ear to the rivals who charged his minister with slackness in the cause, and danger drove the Cardinal to a bolder and yet more unscrupulous device. The entire subjection of Italy to the Emperor was drawing closer the French alliance; and a new treaty had been concluded in April. But this had hardly been signed when the sack of Rome and the danger of the Pope called for bolder measures. Wolsey was despatched on a solemn embassy to Francis to promise an English subsidy on the despatch of a French army across the Alps. But he aimed at turning the Pope's situation to the profit of the divorce. Clement was virtually a prisoner in the Castle of St. Angelo; and as it was impossible for him to fulfil freely the function of a Pope, Wolsey proposed in conjunction with Francis to call a meeting of the College of Cardinals at Avignon which should exercize the papal powers till Clement's liberation. As Wolsey was to preside over this assembly, it would be easy to win from it a favourable answer to Henry's request.

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514—1529.

The Legatine Commission.

But Clement had no mind to surrender his power, and secret orders from the Pope prevented the Italian Cardinals from attending such an assembly. Nor was Wolsey more fortunate in another plan for bringing about the same end by inducing Clement to delegate to him his full powers westward of the Alps. Henry's trust in him was fast waning before these failures and the steady pressure of his rivals at court, and the coldness of the King on his return in September was an omen of his minister's fall. Henry

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

was in fact resolved to take his own course; and while Wolsey sought from the Pope a commission enabling him to try the case in his legatine court and pronounce the marriage null and void by sentence of law, Henry had determined at the suggestion of the Boleyns and apparently of Thomas Cranmer, a Cambridge scholar who was serving as their chaplain, to seek without Wolsey's knowledge from Clement either his approval of a divorce, or if a divorce could not be obtained a dispensation to re-marry without any divorce at all. For some months his envoys could find no admission to the Pope; and though in December Clement succeeded in escaping to Orvieto and drew some courage from the entry of the French army into Italy, his temper was still too timid to venture on any decided course He refused the dispensation altogether. Wolsey's proposal for leaving the matter to a legatine court found better favour; but when the commission reached England it was found to be "of no effect or authority." What Henry wanted was not merely a divorce but the express sanction of the Pope to his divorce, and this Clement steadily evaded. A fresh embassy with Wolsey's favourite and secretary, Stephen Gardiner, at its head reached Orvieto in March 1528 to find in spite of Gardiner's threats hardly better success; but Clement at last consented to a legatine commission for the trial of the case in England. In this commission Cardinal Campeggio, who was looked upon as a partizan of the English King, was joined with Wolsey.

The Papal difficulties.

Great as the concession seemed, this gleam of success failed to hide from the minister the dangers which gathered round him. The great nobles whom he had practically shut out from the King's counsels were longing for his fall. The Boleyns and the young courtiers looked on him as cool in Anne's cause. He was hated alike by men of the old doctrine and men of the new. The clergy had never forgotten his extortions, the monks saw him suppressing small monasteries. The foundation of Cardinal College failed to

reconcile to him the scholars of the New Learning; their poet, Skelton, was among his bitterest assailants. The Protestants, goaded by the persecution of this very year, hated him with a deadly hatred. His French alliances, his declaration of war with the Emperor, hindered the trade with Flanders and secured the hostility of the merchant class. The country at large, galled with murrain and famine and panic-struck by an outbreak of the sweating sickness which carried off two thousand in London alone, laid all its suffering at the door of the Cardinal. And now that Henry's mood itself became uncertain Wolsey knew his hour was come. Were the marriage once made, he told the French ambassador, and a male heir born to the realm, he would withdraw from state affairs and serve God for the rest of his life. But the divorce had still to be brought about ere marriage could be made or heir be born. Henry indeed had seized on the grant of a commission as if the matter were at an end. Anne Boleyn was installed in the royal palace, and honoured with the state of a wife. The new legate, Campeggio, held the bishopric of Salisbury, and had been asked for as judge from the belief that he would favour the King's cause. But he bore secret instructions from the Pope to bring about if possible a reconciliation between Henry and the Queen, and in no case to pronounce sentence without reference to Rome. The slowness of his journey presaged ill; he did not reach England till the end of September, and a month was wasted in vain efforts to bring Henry to a reconciliation or Catharine to retirement into a monastery. A new difficulty disclosed itself in the supposed existence of a brief issued by Pope Julius and now in the possession of the Emperor, which overruled all the objections to the earlier dispensation on which Henry relied. The hearing of the cause was delayed through the winter, while new embassies strove to induce Clement to declare this brief also invalid. Not only was such a demand glaringly unjust, but the progress of the Imperial arms brought vividly home to the Pope its injustice. The danger which he feared was

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

not merely a danger to his temporal domain in Italy. It was a danger to the Papacy itself. It was in vain that new embassies threatened Clement with the loss of his spiritual power over England. To break with the Emperor was to risk the loss of his spiritual power over a far larger world. Charles had already consented to the suspension of the judgement of his diet at Worms, a consent which gave security to the new Protestantism in North Germany. If he burned heretics in the Netherlands, he employed them in his armies. Lutheran soldiers had played their part in the sack of Rome. Lutheranism had spread from North Germany along the Rhine, it was now pushing fast into the hereditary possessions of the Austrian house, it had all but mastered the Low Countries. France itself was mined with heresy; and were Charles once to give way, the whole continent would be lost to Rome.

The Trial of the Divorce.

Amidst difficulties such as these the Papal court saw no course open save one of delay. But the long delay told fatally for Wolsey's fortunes. Even Clement blamed him for having hindered Henry from judging the matter in his own realm and marrying on the sentence of his own courts, and the Boleyns naturally looked upon his policy as dictated by hatred to Anne. Norfolk and the great peers took courage from the bitter tone of the girl; and Henry himself charged the Cardinal with a failure in fulfilling the promises he had made him. King and minister still clung indeed passionately to their hopes from Rome. But in 1529 Charles met their pressure with a pressure of his own; and the progress of his arms decided Clement to avoke the cause to Rome. Wolsey could only hope to anticipate this decision by pushing the trial hastily forward, and at the end of May the two Legates opened their court in the great hall of the Blackfriars. King and Queen were cited to appear before them when the court again met on the eighteenth of June. Henry briefly announced his resolve to live no longer in mortal sin. The Queen offered an appeal to Clement, and on the refusal of the Legates to admit it flung

herself at Henry's feet, "Sire," said Catharine, "I beseech you to pity me, a woman and a stranger, without an assured friend and without an indifferent counsellor. I take God to witness that I have always been to you a true and loyal wife, that I have made it my constant duty to seek your pleasure, that I have loved all whom you loved, whether I have reason or not, whether they are friends to me or foes. I have been your wife for years; I have brought you many children. God knows that when I came to your bed I was a virgin, and I put it to your own conscience to say whether it was not so. If there be any offence which can be alleged against me I consent to depart with infamy; if not, then I pray you to do me justice." The piteous appeal was wasted on a King who was already entertaining Anne Boleyn with royal state in his own palace; the trial proceeded, and on the twenty-third of July the court assembled to pronounce sentence. Henry's hopes were at their highest when they were suddenly dashed to the ground. At the opening of the proceedings Campeggio rose to declare the court adjourned to the following October.

CHAP. II

Wolsey

1514–1529.

Henry's wrath

The adjournment was a mere evasion. The pressure of the Imperialists had at last forced Clement to summon the cause to his own tribunal at Rome, and the jurisdiction of the Legates was at an end. "Now see I," cried the Duke of Suffolk as he dashed his hand on the table, "that the old saw is true, that there was never Legate or Cardinal that did good to England!" The Duke only echoed his master's wrath. Through the twenty years of his reign Henry had known nothing of opposition to his will. His imperious temper had chafed at the weary negotiations, the subterfuges and perfidies of the Pope. Though the commission was his own device, his pride must have been sorely galled by the summons to the Legates' court. The warmest adherents of the older faith revolted against the degradation of the crown. "It was the strangest and newest sight and device," says Cavendish, "that ever we read or heard of in any history or chronicle in any region that a King and

CHAP. III. Wolsey. 1514-1529.

Queen should be convented and constrained by process compellatory to appear in any court as common persons, within their own realm and dominion, to abide the judgement and decree of their own subjects, having the royal diadem and prerogative thereof." Even this degradation had been borne in vain. Foreign and Papal tribunal as that of the Legates really was, it lay within Henry's kingdom and had the air of an English court. But the citation to Rome was a summons to the King to plead in a court without his realm. Wolsey had himself warned Clement of the hopelessness of expecting Henry to submit to such humiliation as this. "If the King be cited to appear in person or by proxy and his prerogative be interfered with, none of his subjects will tolerate the insult. . . . To cite the King to Rome, to threaten him with excommunication, is no more tolerable than to deprive him of his royal dignity. . . . If he were to appear in Italy it would be at the head of a formidable army." But Clement had been deaf to the warning, and the case had been avoked out of the realm.

Wolsey's fall.

Henry's wrath fell at once on Wolsey. Whatever furtherance or hindrance the Cardinal had given to his re-marriage, it was Wolsey who had dissuaded him from acting at the first independently, from conducting the cause in his own courts and acting on the sentence of his own judges. Whether to secure the succession by a more indisputable decision or to preserve uninjured the prerogatives of the Papal see, it was Wolsey who had counselled him to seek a divorce from Rome and promised him success in his suit. And in this counsel Wolsey stood alone. Even Clement had urged the King to carry out his original purpose when it was too late. All that the Pope sought was to be freed from the necessity of meddling in the matter at all. It was Wolsey who had forced Papal intervention on him, as he had forced it on Henry, and the failure of his plans was fatal to him. From the close of the Legatine court Henry would see him no more, and his favourite, Stephen Gardiner, who had become chief Secretary

of State, succeeded him in the King's confidence. If Wolsey still remained minister for a while, it was because the thread of the complex foreign negotiations which he was conducting could not be roughly broken. Here too however failure awaited him. His diplomacy sought to bring fresh pressure on the Pope and to provide a fresh check on the Emperor by a closer alliance with France. But Francis was anxious to recover his children who had remained as hostages for his return; he was weary of the long struggle, and hopeless of aid from his Italian allies. At this crisis of his fate therefore Wolsey saw himself deceived and outwitted by the conclusion of peace between France and the Emperor in a new treaty at Cambray. Not only was his French policy no longer possible, but a reconciliation with Charles was absolutely needful, and such a reconciliation could only be brought about by Wolsey's fall. In October, on the very day that the Cardinal took his place with a haughty countenance and all his former pomp in the Court of Chancery, an indictment was preferred against him by the King's attorney for receiving bulls from Rome in violation of the Statute of Provisors. A few days later he was deprived of the seals. Wolsey was prostrated by the blow. In a series of abject appeals he offered to give up everything that he possessed if the King would but cease from his displeasure. "His face," wrote the French ambassador, "is dwindled to half its natural size. In truth his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen as they are, cannot help pitying him." For the moment Henry seemed contented with his disgrace. A thousand boats full of Londoners covered the Thames to see the Cardinal's barge pass to the Tower, but he was permitted to retire to Esher. Although judgement of forfeiture and imprisonment was given against him in the King's Bench at the close of October, in the following February he received a pardon on surrender of his vast possessions to the Crown and was permitted to withdraw to his diocese of York, the one dignity he had been suffered to retain.

CHAPTER IV.

THOMAS CROMWELL.

1529—1540.

The new Despotism. THE ten years which follow the fall of Wolsey are among the most momentous in our history. The Monarchy at last realized its power, and the work for which Wolsey had paved the way was carried out with a terrible thoroughness. The one great institution which could still offer resistance to the royal will was struck down. The Church became a mere instrument of the central despotism. The people learned their helplessness in rebellions easily suppressed and avenged with ruthless severity. A reign of terror, organized with consummate and merciless skill, held England panic-stricken at Henry's feet. The noblest heads rolled from the block. Virtue and learning could not save Thomas More; royal descent could not save Lady Salisbury. The putting away of one queen, the execution of another, taught England that nothing was too high for Henry's "courage" or too sacred for his "appetite." Parliament assembled only to sanction acts of unscrupulous tyranny, or to build up by its own statutes the fabric of absolute rule. All the constitutional safeguards of English freedom were swept away. Arbitrary taxation, arbitrary legislation, arbitrary imprisonment were powers claimed without dispute and unsparingly used by the Crown.

The history of this great revolution, for it is nothing less, is the history of a single man. In the whole line of

English statesmen there is no one of whom we would willingly know so much, no one of whom we really know so little, as of Thomas Cromwell. When he meets us in Henry's service he had already passed middle life; and during his earlier years it is hardly possible to do more than disentangle a few fragmentary facts from the mass of fable which gathered round them. His youth was one of roving adventure. Whether he was the son of a poor blacksmith at Putney or no, he could hardly have been more than a boy when he was engaged in the service of the Marchioness of Dorset, and he must still have been young when he took part as a common soldier in the wars of Italy, a "ruffian," as he owned afterwards to Cranmer, in the most unscrupulous school the world contained. But it was a school in which he learned lessons even more dangerous than those of the camp. He not only mastered the Italian language but drank in the manners and tone of the Italy around him, the Italy of the Borgias and the Medici. It was with Italian versatility that he turned from the camp to the counting-house; he was certainly engaged as a commercial agent to one of the Venetian traders; tradition finds him as a clerk at Antwerp; and in 1512 history at last encounters him as a thriving wool merchant at Middelburg in Zealand.

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. 1520–1540.

Returning to England, Cromwell continued to amass wealth as years went on by adding the trade of scrivener, something between that of a banker and attorney, to his other occupations, as well as by advancing money to the poorer nobles; and on the outbreak of the second war with France we find him a busy and influential member of the Commons in Parliament. Five years later, in 1528, the aim of his ambition was declared by his entering into Wolsey's service. The Cardinal needed a man of business for the suppression of the smaller monasteries which he had undertaken as well as for the transfer of their revenues to his foundations at Oxford and Ipswich, and he showed his usual skill in the choice of men by finding such an

Cromwell and Wolsey.

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540.

agent in Cromwell. The task was an unpopular one, and it was carried out with a rough indifference to the feelings it aroused which involved Cromwell in the hate that was gathering round his master. But his wonderful self-reliance and sense of power only broke upon the world at Wolsey's fall. Of the hundreds of dependants who waited on the Cardinal's nod, Cromwell, hated and in danger as he must have known himself to be, was the only one who clung to his master at the last. In the lonely hours of his disgrace at Esher Wolsey "made his moan unto Master Cromwell, who comforted him the best he could, and desired my Lord to give him leave to go to London, where he would make or mar, which was always his common saying." His plan was to purchase not only his master's safety but his own. Wolsey was persuaded to buy off the hostility of the courtiers by giving his personal confirmation to the prodigal grants of pensions and annuities which had been already made from his revenues, while Cromwell acquired importance as the go-between in these transactions. "Then began both noblemen and others who had patents from the King," for grants from the Cardinal's estate, "to make earnest suit to Master Cromwell for to solicit their causes, and for his pains therein they promised not only to reward him, but to show him such pleasure as should be in their power." But if Cromwell showed his consummate craft in thus serving himself as well as his master, he can have had no personal reasons for the stand he made in the Parliament which was summoned in November against a bill for disqualifying the Cardinal for all after employment, which was introduced by Norfolk and More. It was by Cromwell that this was defeated and it was by him that the negotiations were conducted which permitted the fallen minister to withdraw pardoned to York.

The Howards.

A general esteem seems to have rewarded this rare instance of fidelity to a ruined patron. "For his honest behaviour in his master's cause he was esteemed the most faithfullest servant, and was of all men greatly com-

ɑded." Cromwell however had done more than save ɪself from ruin. The negotiations for Wolsey's pensions l given him access to the King, and "by his witty ɑeanour he grew continually in the King's favour" t the favour had been won by more than "witty ɑeanour." In a private interview with Henry Cromwell dly advised him to cut the knot of the divorce by the ɪple exercize of his own supremacy. The advice struck key-note of the later policy by which the daring ɪnsellor was to change the whole face of Church and ɪte; but Henry still clung to the hopes held out by new ministers who had followed Wolsey, and shrank haps as yet from the bare absolutism to which Cromwell led him. The advice at any rate was concealed; and, ugh high in the King's favour, his new servant waited iently the progress of events. CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529–1540.

The Howards.

Che first result of Wolsey's fall was a marked change in system of administration. Both the Tudor Kings had ried on their government mainly through the agency of at ecclesiastics. Archbishop Morton and Bishop Fox l been successively ministers of Henry the Seventh. ɔlsey had been the minister of Henry the Eighth. But th the ruin of the Cardinal the rule of the churchmen ɪsed. The seals were given to Sir Thomas More. The l direction of affairs lay in the hands of two great ɔles, of the Duke of Suffolk who was President of the uncil, and of the Lord Treasurer, Thomas Howard, the ɪke of Norfolk. From this hour to the close of the age the Tudors the Howards were to play a prominent part English history. They had originally sprung from the ɔle of lawyers who rose to wealth and honour through ɪir employment by the crown. Their earliest known an-ɪtor was a judge under Edward the First; and his de-ɪndants remained wealthy landowners in the eastern ɪnties till early in the fifteenth century they were ldenly raised to distinction by the marriage of Sir bert Howard with a wife who became heiress of the

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. 1529–1540.

houses of Arundel and Norfolk, the Fitz-Alans and the Mowbrays. John Howard, the issue of this marriage, was a prominent Yorkist and stood high in the favour of the Yorkist kings. He was one of the councillors of Edward the Fourth, and received from Richard the Third the old dignities of the house of Mowbray, the office of Earl Marshal and the Dukedom of Norfolk. But he had hardly risen to greatness when he fell fighting by Richard's side at Bosworth Field. His son was taken prisoner in the same battle and remained for three years in the Tower. But his refusal to join in the rising of the Earl of Lincoln was rewarded by Henry the Seventh with his release, his restoration to the Earldom of Surrey, and his employment in the service of the crown where he soon took rank among the king's most trusted councillors. His military abilities were seen in campaigns against the Scots which won back for him the office of Earl Marshal, and in the victory of Flodden which restored to him the Dukedom of Norfolk. The son of this victor of Flodden, Thomas, Earl of Surrey, had already served as lieutenant in Ireland and as general against Albany on the Scottish frontier before his succession to the dukedom in 1524. His coolness and tact had displayed themselves during the revolt against Benevolences, when his influence alone averted a rising in the Eastern Counties. Since Buckingham's death his house stood at the head of the English nobility : his office of Lord Treasurer placed him high at the royal council board, and Henry's love for his niece, Anne Boleyn, gave a fresh spur to the duke's ambition. But his influence had till now been over-shadowed by the greatness of Wolsey. With the Cardinal's fall however he at once came to the front. Though he had bowed to the royal policy, he was known as the leader of the party which clung to alliance with the Emperor, and now that such an alliance was needful Henry counted on Norfolk to renew the friendship with Charles.

The Parliament

An even greater revolution was seen in the summons of a Parliament which met in November 1529. Its assembly

as no doubt prompted in part by the actual needs of the rown, for Henry was not only penniless but overwhelmed ith debts and Parliament alone could give him freedom om these embarrassments. But the importance of the uestions brought before the Houses, and their repeated ssembly throughout the rest of Henry's reign, point to a efinite change in the royal system. The policy of Edward he Fourth, of Henry the Seventh, and of Wolsey was bandoned. Instead of looking on Parliament as a danger he monarchy now felt itself strong enough to use it as a ool. The obedience of the Commons was seen in the eadiness with which they at once passed a bill to release he crown from its debts But Henry counted on more han obedience. He counted, and justly counted, on the arm support of the Houses in his actual strife with ome. The plan of a divorce was no doubt unpopular, o violent was the indignation against Anne Boleyn that she ardly dared to stir abroad. But popular feeling ran almost s bitterly against the Papacy. The sight of an English ing and an English Queen pleading before a foreign ibunal revived the old resentment against the subjection f Englishmen to Papal courts. The helplessness of lement in the grasp of the Emperor recalled the helplessess of the Popes at Avignon in the grasp of the Kings of rance. That Henry should sue for justice to Rome was alling enough, but the hottest adherent of the Papacy was utraged when the suit of his King was granted or refused t the will of Charles. It was against this degradation of he Crown that the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire had een long since aimed. The need of Papal support to their isputed title which had been felt by the Houses of Lanaster and York had held these statutes in suspense, and he Legatine Court of Wolsey had openly defied them. They ere still however legally in force; they were part of the arliamentary tradition; and it was certain that Parliaent would be as ready as ever to enforce the independent urisdiction of the Crown.

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

1529-1540.

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

1529-1540.

Hopes of the New Learning.

Not less significant was the attitude of the New Learning. On Wolsey's fall the seals had been offered to Warham, and it was probably at his counsel that they were finally given to Sir Thomas More. The chancellor's dream, if we may judge it from the acts of his brief ministry, seems to have been that of carrying out the religious reformation which had been demanded by Colet and Erasmus while checking the spirit of revolt against the unity of the Church. His severities against the Protestants, exaggerated as they have been by polemic rancour, remain the one stain on a memory that knows no other. But it was only by a rigid severance of the cause of reform from what seemed to him the cause of revolution that More could hope for a successful issue to the projects of reform which the council laid before Parliament. The Petition of the Commons sounded like an echo of Colet's famous address to the Convocation. It attributed the growth of heresy not more to "frantic and seditious books published in the English tongue contrary to the very true Catholic and Christian faith" than to "the extreme and uncharitable behaviour of divers ordinaries." It remonstrated against the legislation of the clergy in Convocation without the King's assent or that of his subjects, the oppressive procedure of the Church Courts, the abuses of ecclesiastical patronage, and the excessive number of holydays. Henry referred the Petition to the bishops, but they could devise no means of redress, and the ministry persisted in pushing through the Houses their bills for ecclesiastical reform. The importance of the new measures lay really in the action of Parliament. They were an explicit announcement that church-reform was now to be undertaken, not by the clergy, but by the people at large. On the other hand it was clear that it would be carried out in a spirit of loyalty to the church. The Commons forced from Bishop Fisher an apology for words which were taken as a doubt thrown on their orthodoxy. Henry forbade the circulation of

Tyndale's translation of the Bible as executed in a Protestant spirit. The reforming measures however were pushed resolutely on. Though the questions of Convocation and the Bishops' courts were adjourned for further consideration, the fees of the courts were curtailed, the clergy restricted from lay employments, pluralities restrained, and residence enforced. In spite of a dogged opposition from the bishops the bills received the assent of the House of Lords, "to the great rejoicing of lay people, and the great displeasure of spiritual persons."

Death of Wolsey.

Not less characteristic of the New Learning was the intellectual pressure it strove to bring to bear on the wavering Pope. Cranmer was still active in the cause of Anne Boleyn; he had just published a book in favour of the divorce; and he now urged on the ministry an appeal to the learned opinion of Christendom by calling for the judgement of the chief universities of Europe. His counsel was adopted; but Norfolk trusted to coarser means of attaining his end. Like most of the English nobles and the whole of the merchant class, his sympathies were with the House of Burgundy; he looked upon Wolsey as the real hindrance to the divorce through the French policy which had driven Charles into a hostile attitude; and he counted on the Cardinal's fall to bring about a renewal of friendship with the Emperor and to ensure his support. The father of Anne Boleyn, now created Earl of Wiltshire, was sent in 1530 on this errand to the Imperial Court. But Charles remained firm to Catharine's cause, and Clement would do nothing in defiance of the Emperor. Nor was the appeal to the learned world more successful. In France the profuse bribery of the English agents would have failed with the university of Paris but for the interference of Francis himself, eager to regain Henry's goodwill by this office of friendship. As shameless an exercize of the King's own authority was needed to wring an approval of his cause from Oxford and Cambridge. In Germany the very Protestants, then in the fervour of their moral revival

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1530.

and hoping little from a proclaimed opponent of Luther, were dead against the King. So far as could be seen from Cranmer's test every learned man in Christendom but for bribery and threats would have condemned the royal cause. Henry was embittered by failures which he attributed to the unskilful diplomacy of his new counsellors; and it was rumoured that he had been heard to regret the loss of the more dexterous statesman whom they had overthrown. Wolsey who since the beginning of the year had remained at York, though busy in appearance with the duties of his see, was hoping more and more as the months passed by for his recall. But the jealousy of his political enemies was roused by the King's regrets, and the pitiless hand of Norfolk was seen in the quick and deadly blow which he dealt at his fallen rival. On the fourth of November, on the eve of his installation feast, the Cardinal was arrested on a charge of high treason and conducted by the Lieutenant of the Tower towards London. Already broken by his enormous labours, by internal disease, and the sense of his fall, Wolsey accepted the arrest as a sentence of death. An attack of dysentery forced him to rest at the abbey of Leicester, and as he reached the gate he said feebly to the brethren who met him, "I am come to lay my bones among you." On his death-bed his thoughts still clung to the prince whom he had served. "Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king," murmured the dying man, "He would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my due reward for my pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince."

Cromwell's policy.

No words could paint with so terrible a truthfulness the spirit of the new despotism which Wolsey had done more than any of those who went before him to build up. From tempers like his all sense of loyalty to England, to its freedom, to its institutions, had utterly passed away, and the one duty which the statesman owned was a duty to his "prince." To what issues such a conception of a

Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

statesman's duty might lead was now to be seen in the career of a greater than Wolsey. The two dukes had struck down the Cardinal only to set up another master in his room. Since his interview with Henry Cromwell had remained in the King's service, where his steady advance in the royal favour was marked by his elevation to the post of secretary of state. His patience was at last rewarded by the failure of the policy for which his own had been set aside. At the close of 1530 the college of cardinals formally rejected the King's request for leave to decide the whole matter in his own spiritual courts; and the defeat of Norfolk's project drove Henry nearer and nearer to the bold plan from which he had shrunk at Wolsey's fall. Cromwell was again ready with his suggestion that the King should disavow the Papal jurisdiction, declare himself Head of the Church within his realm, and obtain a divorce from his own Ecclesiastical Courts But he looked on the divorce as simply the prelude to a series of changes which the new minister was bent upon accomplishing. In all his chequered life what had left its deepest stamp on him was Italy. Not only in the rapidity and ruthlessness of his designs, but in their larger scope, their clearer purpose, and their admirable combination, the Italian state-craft entered with Cromwell into English politics. He is in fact the first English minister in whom we can trace through the whole period of his rule the steady working out of a great and definite aim, that of raising the King to absolute authority on the ruins of every rival power within the realm. It was not that Cromwell was a mere slave of tyranny. Whether we may trust the tale that carries him in his youth to Florence or no, his statesmanship was closely modelled on the ideal of the Florentine thinker whose book was constantly in his hand. Even as a servant of Wolsey he startled the future Cardinal, Reginald Pole, by bidding him take for his manual in politics the "Prince" of Machiavelli. Machiavelli hoped to find in Cæsar

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

1529-1540.

Borgia or in the later Lorenzo de' Medici a tyrant who after crushing all rival tyrannies might unite and regenerate Italy; and terrible and ruthless as his policy was, the final aim of Cromwell seems to have been that of Machiavelli, an aim of securing enlightenment and order for England by the concentration of all authority in the crown.

The Headship of the Church.

The first step towards such an end was the freeing the monarchy from its spiritual obedience to Rome. What the first of the Tudors had done for the political independence of the kingdom, the second was to do for its ecclesiastical independence. Henry the Seventh had freed England from the interference of France or the House of Burgundy; and in the question of the divorce Cromwell saw the means of bringing Henry the Eighth to free it from the interference of the Papacy. In such an effort resistance could be looked for only from the clergy. But their resistance was what Cromwell desired. The last check on royal absolutism which had survived the Wars of the Roses lay in the wealth, the independent synods and jurisdiction, and the religious claims of the church; and for the success of the new policy it was necessary to reduce the great ecclesiastical body to a mere department of the State in which all authority should flow from the sovereign alone, his will be the only law, his decision the only test of truth. Such a change however was hardly to be wrought without a struggle; and the question of national independence in all ecclesiastical matters furnished ground on which the crown could conduct this struggle to the best advantage The secretary's first blow showed how unscrupulously the struggle was to be waged. A year had passed since Wolsey had been convicted of a breach of the Statute of Provisors. The pedantry of the judges declared the whole nation to have been formally involved in the same charge by its acceptance of his authority. The legal absurdity was now redressed by a general pardon, but from this pardon the clergy found themselves omitted. In the spring of 1531 Convocation

was assembled to be told that forgiveness could be bought at no less a price than the payment of a fine amounting to a million of our present money, and the acknowledgement of the King as "the chief protector, the only and supreme lord, and Head of the Church and Clergy of England." Unjust as was the first demand, they at once submitted to it; against the second they struggled hard. But their appeals to Henry and Cromwell met only with demands for instant obedience. A compromise was at last arrived at by the insertion of a qualifying phrase "So far as the law of Christ will allow;" and with this addition the words were again submitted by Warham to the Convocation. There was a general silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the Archbishop. "Then are we all silent," replied a voice from among the crowd.

Cathar put au

There is no ground for thinking that the "Headship of the Church" which Henry claimed in this submission was more than a warning addressed to the independent spirit of the clergy, or that it bore as yet the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It certainly implied no independence of Rome, for negotiations were still being carried on with the Papal Court. But it told Clement plainly that in any strife that might come between himself and Henry the clergy were in the King's hand, and that he must look for no aid from them in any struggle with the crown. The warning was backed by an address to the Pope from the Lords and some of the Commons who assembled after a fresh prorogation of the Houses in the spring. "The cause of his Majesty," the Peers were made to say, "is the cause of each of ourselves." They laid before the Pope what they represented as the judgement of the Universities in favour of the divorce; but they faced boldly the event of its rejection. "Our condition," they ended, "will not be wholly irremediable. Extreme remedies are ever harsh of application; but he that is sick will by all means be rid of his distemper." In the summer the banishment of Catharine from the King's palace to a house at Ampthill

showed the firmness of Henry's resolve. Each of these acts were no doubt intended to tell on the Pope's decision, for Henry still clung to the hope of extorting from Clement a favourable answer, and at the close of the year a fresh embassy with Gardiner, now Bishop of Winchester, at its head was despatched to the Papal Court. But the embassy failed like its predecessors, and at the opening of 1532 Cromwell was free to take more decisive steps in the course on which he had entered.

What the nature of his policy was to be had already been detected by eyes as keen as his own. More had seen in Wolsey's fall an opening for the realization of those schemes of religious and even of political reform on which the scholars of the New Learning had long been brooding. The substitution of the Lords of the Council for the autocratic rule of the Cardinal-minister, the break-up of the great mass of powers which had been gathered into a single hand, the summons of a Parliament, the ecclesiastical reforms which it at once sanctioned, were measures which promised a more legal and constitutional system of government. The question of the divorce presented to More no serious difficulty. Untenable as Henry's claim seemed to the new Chancellor, his faith in the omnipotence of Parliament would have enabled him to submit to any statute which named a new spouse as Queen and her children as heirs to the crown. But as Cromwell's policy unfolded itself he saw that more than this was impending. The Catholic instinct of his mind, the dread of a rent Christendom and of the wars and bigotry that must come of its rending, united with More's theological convictions to resist any spiritual severance of England from the Papacy. His love for freedom, his revolt against the growing autocracy of the crown, the very height and grandeur of his own spiritual convictions, all bent him to withstand a system which would concentrate in the King the whole power of Church as of State, would leave him without the one check that remained

on his despotism, and make him arbiter of the religious faith of his subjects. The later revolt of the Puritans against the King-worship which Cromwell established proved the justice of the prevision which forced More in the spring of 1532 to resign the post of Chancellor.

England and Rome.

But the revolution from which he shrank was an inevitable one. Till now every Englishman had practically owned a double life and a double allegiance. As citizen of a temporal state his life was bounded by English shores and his loyalty due exclusively to his English King. But as citizen of the state spiritual he belonged not to England, but to Christendom. The law which governed him was not a national law but a law that embraced every European nation, and the ordinary course of judicial appeals in ecclesiastical cases proved to him that the sovereignty in all matters of conscience or religion lay not at Westminster but at Rome. Such a distinction could scarcely fail to bring embarrassment with it as the sense of national life and national pride waxed stronger; and from the reign of the Edwards the problem of reconciling the spiritual and temporal relations of the realm grew daily more difficult. Parliament had hardly risen into life when it became the organ of the national jealousy whether of any Papal jurisdiction without the realm or of the separate life and separate jurisdiction of the clergy within it. The movement was long arrested by religious reaction and civil war. But the fresh sense of national greatness which sprang from the policy of Henry the Eighth, the fresh sense of national unity as the Monarchy gathered all power into its single hand, would have itself revived the contest even without the spur of the divorce. What the question of the divorce really did was to stimulate the movement by bringing into clearer view the wreck of the great Christian commonwealth of which England had till now formed a part and the impossibility of any real exercize of a spiritual sovereignty over it by the weakened Papacy, as well as by outraging the national

CHAP IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540. —

pride through the summons of the King to a foreign bar and the submission of English interests to the will of a foreign Emperor.

Act of Appeals.

With such a spur as this the movement which More dreaded moved forward as quickly as Cromwell desired. The time had come when England was to claim for herself the fulness of power, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, within her bounds; and in the concentration of all authority within the hands of the sovereign which was the political characteristic of the time to claim this power for the nation was to claim it for the King. The import of that headship of the Church which Henry had assumed in the preceding year was brought fully out in one of the propositions laid before the Convocation of 1532. "The King's Majesty," runs this memorable clause, "hath as well the care of the souls of his subjects as their bodies and may by the law of God by his Parliament make laws touching and concerning as well the one as the other." The principle embodied in these words was carried ou in a series of decisive measures Under strong pressure the Convocation was brought to pray that the power o independent legislation till now exercized by the Church should come to an end, and to promise "that from henceforth we shall forbear to enact, promulge, or put into execution any such constitutions and ordinances so by us to be made in time coming, unless your Highness by your royal assent shall license us to make, promulge, and execute them, and the same so made be approved by you Highness's authority." Rome was dealt with in the same unsparing fashion. The Parliament forbade by statute any further appeals to the Papal Court; and on a petition from the clergy in Convocation the Houses granted powe to the King to suspend the payments of first-fruits, or th year's revenue which each bishop paid to Rome on hi election to a see. All judicial, all financial connexio with the Papacy was broken by these two measures. Th last indeed was as yet but a menace which Henry migh

Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

use in his negotiations with Clement. The hope which had been entertained of aid from Charles was now abandoned; and the overthrow of Norfolk and his policy of alliance with the Empire was seen at the midsummer of 1532 in the conclusion of a league with France. Cromwell had fallen back on Wolsey's system; and the divorce was now to be looked for from the united pressure of the French and English Kings on the Papal court.

Marriage of Anne Boleyn.

But the pressure was as unsuccessful as before. In November Clement threatened the King with excommunication if he did not restore Catharine to her place as Queen and abstain from all intercourse with Anne Boleyn till the case was tried. But Henry still refused to submit to the judgement of any court outside his realm; and the Pope, ready as he was with evasion and delay, dared not alienate Charles by consenting to a trial within it. The lavish pledges which Francis had given in an interview during the preceding summer may have aided to spur the King to a decisive step which closed the long debate. At the opening of 1533 Henry was privately married to Anne Boleyn. The match however was carefully kept secret while the Papal sanction was being gained for the appointment of Cranmer to the see of Canterbury which had become vacant by Archbishop Warham's death in the preceding year. But Cranmer's consecration at the close of March was the signal for more open action, and Cromwell's policy was at last brought fairly into play. The new primate at once laid the question of the King's marriage before the two Houses of Convocation, and both voted that the licence of Pope Julius had been beyond the Papal powers and that the marriage which it authorized was void. In May the King's suit was brought before the Archbishop in his court at Dunstable; his judgement annulled the marriage with Catharine as void from the beginning, and pronounced the marriage with Anne Boleyn, which her pregnancy had forced Henry to reveal, a lawful marriage. A week later the hand of Cranmer

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1530-1540.

placed upon Anne's brow the crown which she had coveted so long.

Act of Supremacy.

"There was much murmuring" at measures such as these. Many thought "that the Bishop of Rome would curse all Englishmen, and that the Emperor and he would destroy all the people." Fears of the overthrow of religion told on the clergy; the merchants dreaded an interruption of the trade with Flanders, Italy, and Spain. But Charles, though still loyal to his aunt's cause, had no mind to incur risks for her; and Clement, though he annulled Cranmer's proceedings, hesitated as yet to take sterner action. Henry on the other hand, conscious that the die was thrown, moved rapidly forward in the path that Cromwell had opened. The Pope's reversal of the Primate's judgement was answered by an appeal to a General Council. The decision of the cardinals to whom the case was referred in the spring of 1534, a decision which asserted the lawfulness of Catharine's marriage, was met by the enforcement of the long suspended statute forbidding the payment of first-fruits to the Pope. Though the King was still firm in his resistance to Lutheran opinions and at this moment endeavoured to prevent by statute the importation of Lutheran books, the less scrupulous hand of his minister was seen already striving to find a counterpoise to the hostility of the Emperor in an alliance with the Lutheran princes of North Germany. Cromwell was now fast rising to a power which rivalled Wolsey's. His elevation to the post of Lord Privy Seal placed him on a level with the great nobles of the Council board; and Norfolk, constant in his hopes of reconciliation with Charles and the Papacy, saw his plans set aside for the wider and more daring projects of "the blacksmith's son." Cromwell still clung to the political engine whose powers he had turned to the service of the Crown. The Parliament which had been summoned at Wolsey's fall met steadily year after year; and measure after measure had shown its accordance with the royal will in the strife with Rome. It was now

called to deal a final blow. Step by step the ground had been cleared for the great Statute by which the new character of the English Church was defined in the session of 1534. By the Act of Supremacy authority in all matters ecclesiastical was vested solely in the Crown. The courts spiritual became as thoroughly the King's courts as the temporal courts at Westminster. The Statute ordered that the King "shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the Imperial Crown of this realm as well the title and state thereof as all the honours, jurisdictions, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity belonging, with full power to visit, repress, redress, reform, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction might or may lawfully be reformed."

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1530-1540.

The Vicar-General.

The full import of the Act of Supremacy was only seen in the following year. At the opening of 1535 Henry formally took the title of "on earth Supreme Head of the Church of England," and some months later Cromwell was raised to the post of Vicar-General or Vicegerent of the King in all matters ecclesiastical. His title, like his office, recalled the system of Wolsey. It was not only as Legate but in later years as Vicar-general of the Pope that Wolsey had brought all spiritual causes in England to an English court. The supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the realm passed into the hands of a minister who as Chancellor already exercized its supreme civil jurisdiction. The Papal power had therefore long seemed transferred to the Crown before the legislative measures which followed the divorce actually transferred it. It was in fact the system of Catholicism itself that trained men to look without surprize on the concentration of all spiritual and secular authority in Cromwell. Successor to Wolsey as Keeper of the Great Seal, it seemed natural enough that

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

Cromwell should succeed him also as Vicar-General of the Church and that the union of the two powers should be restored in the hands of a minister of the King. But the mere fact that these powers were united in the hands not of a priest but of a layman showed the new drift of the royal policy. The Church was no longer to be brought indirectly under the royal power; in the policy of Cromwell it was to be openly laid prostrate at the foot of the throne.

Subjection of the Bishops.

And this policy his position enabled him to carry out with a terrible thoroughness. One great step towards its realization had already been taken in the statute which annihilated the free legislative powers of the convocations of the Clergy. Another followed in an act which under the pretext of restoring the free election of bishops turned every prelate into a nominee of the King. The election of bishops by the chapters of their cathedral churches had long become formal, and their appointment had since the time of the Edwards been practically made by the Papacy on the nomination of the Crown. The privilege of free election was now with bitter irony restored to the chapters, but they were compelled on pain of præmunire to choose whatever candidate was recommended by the King. This strange expedient has lasted till the present time, though its character has wholly changed with the developement of constitutional rule. The nomination of bishops has ever since the accession of the Georges passed from the King in person to the Minister who represents the will of the people. Practically therefore an English prelate, alone among all the prelates of the world, is now raised to his episcopal throne by the same popular election which raised Ambrose to his episcopal chair at Milan. But at the moment of the change Cromwell's measure reduced the English bishops to absolute dependence on the Crown. Their dependence would have been complete had his policy been thoroughly carried out and the royal power of deposition put in force as well as that of appointment. As it was

Henry could warn the Archbishop of Dublin that if he persevered in his "proud folly, we be able to remove you again and to put another man of more virtue and honesty in your place." By the more ardent partizans of the Reformation this dependence of the bishops on the Crown was fully recognized. On the death of Henry the Eighth Cranmer took out a new commission from Edward for the exercize of his office. Latimer, when the royal policy clashed with his belief, felt bound to resign the See of Worcester. If the power of deposition was quietly abandoned by Elizabeth, the abandonment was due not so much to any deference for the religious instincts of the nation as to the fact that the steady servility of the bishops rendered its exercize unnecessary.

The Religious Houses

A second step in Cromwell's policy followed hard on this enslavement of the episcopate. Master of Convocation, absolute master of the bishops, Henry had become master of the monastic orders through the right of visitation over them which had been transferred by the Act of Supremacy from the Papacy to the Crown. The monks were soon to know what this right of visitation implied in the hands of the Vicar-General. As an outlet for religious enthusiasm monasticism was practically dead. The friar, now that his fervour of devotion and his intellectual energy had passed away, had sunk into a mere beggar. The monks had become mere landowners. Most of the religious houses were anxious only to enlarge their revenues and to diminish the number of those who shared them. In the general carelessness which prevailed as to the spiritual objects of their trust, in the wasteful management of their estates, in the indolence and self-indulgence which for the most part characterized them, the monastic establishments simply exhibited the faults of all corporate bodies that have outlived the work which they were created to perform. They were no more unpopular however than such corporate bodies generally are. The Lollard cry for their

. IV. suppression had died away. In the north, where some of the greatest abbeys were situated, the monks were on good terms with the country gentry and their houses served as schools for their children; nor is there any sign of a different feeling elsewhere.

pres- of the ser nas- ies. But they had drawn on themselves at once the hatred of the New Learning and of the Monarchy. In the early days of the revival of letters Popes and bishops had joined with princes and scholars in welcoming the diffusion of culture and the hopes of religious reform. But though an abbot or a prior here or there might be found among the supporters of the movement, the monastic orders as a whole repelled it with unswerving obstinacy. The quarrel only became more bitter as years went on. The keen sarcasms of Erasmus, the insolent buffoonery of Hutten, were lavished on the "lovers of darkness" and of the cloister. In England Colet and More echoed with greater reserve the scorn and invective of their friends. The Monarchy had other causes for its hate. In Cromwell's system there was no room for either the virtues or the vices of monasticism, for its indolence and superstition, or for its independence of the throne. The bold stand which the monastic orders had made against benevolences had never been forgiven, while the revenues of their foundations offered spoil vast enough to fill the royal treasury and secure a host of friends for the new reforms. Two royal commissioners therefore were despatched on a general visitation of the religious houses, and their reports formed a "Black Book" which was laid before Parliament in 1536. It was acknowledged that about a third of the houses, including the bulk of the larger abbeys, were fairly and decently conducted. The rest were charged with drunkenness, with simony, and with the foulest and most revolting crimes. The character of the visitors, the sweeping nature of their report, and the long debate which followed on its reception, leaves little doubt that these charges were grossly exaggerated. But the want

of any effective discipline which had resulted from their exemption from all but Papal supervision told fatally against monastic morality even in abbeys like St. Alban's; and the acknowledgement of Warham, as well as a partial measure of suppression begun by Wolsey, go some way to prove that in the smaller houses at least indolence had passed into crime. A cry of "Down with them" broke from the Commons as the report was read. The country however was still far from desiring the utter downfall of the monastic system, and a long and bitter debate was followed by a compromise which suppressed all houses whose income fell below £200 a year. Of the thousand religious houses which then existed in England nearly four hundred were dissolved under this Act and their revenues granted to the Crown.

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. 1530-1540.

Enslavement of the Clergy.

The secular clergy alone remained; and injunction after injunction from the Vicar-General taught rector and vicar that they must learn to regard themselves as mere mouthpieces of the royal will. The Church was gagged. With the instinct of genius Cromwell discerned the part which the pulpit, as the one means which then existed of speaking to the people at large, was to play in the religious and political struggle that was at hand; and he resolved to turn it to the profit of the Monarchy. The restriction of the right of preaching to priests who received licenses from the Crown silenced every voice of opposition. Even to those who received these licenses theological controversy was forbidden; and a high-handed process of "tuning the pulpits" by express directions as to the subject and tenor of each special discourse made the preachers at every crisis mere means of diffusing the royal will. As a first step in this process every bishop, abbot, and parish priest, was required by the new Vicar-General to preach against the usurpation of the Papacy and to proclaim the king as supreme Head of the Church on earth. The very topics of the sermon were carefully prescribed; the bishops were held responsible for the

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540. — *The Terror.*

compliance of the clergy with these orders; and the sheriffs were held responsible for the obedience of the bishops.

While the great revolution which struck down the Church was in progress England looked silently on. In all the earlier ecclesiastical changes, in the contest over the Papal jurisdiction and Papal exactions, in the reform of the Church courts, even in the curtailment of the legislative independence of the clergy, the nation as a whole had gone with the King. But from the enslavement of the priesthood, from the gagging of the pulpits, from the suppression of the monasteries, the bulk of the nation stood aloof. There were few voices indeed of protest. As the royal policy disclosed itself, as the Monarchy trampled under foot the tradition and reverence of ages gone by, as its figure rose bare and terrible out of the wreck of old institutions, England simply held her breath. It is only through the stray depositions of royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under this silence of the people. For the silence was a silence of terror. Before Cromwell's rise and after his fall from power the reign of Henry the Eighth witnessed no more than the common tyranny and bloodshed of the time. But the years of Cromwell's administration form the one period in our history which deserves the name that men have given to the rule of Robespierre. It was the English Terror. It was by terror that Cromwell mastered the King. Cranmer could plead for him at a later time with Henry as "one whose surety was only by your Majesty, who loved your Majesty, as I ever thought, no less than God." But the attitude of Cromwell towards the King was something more than that of absolute dependence and unquestioning devotion. He was "so vigilant to preserve your Majesty from all treasons," adds the Primate, "that few could be so secretly conceived but he detected the same from the beginning." Henry, like every Tudor, was fearless of open danger, but

tremulously sensitive to the lightest breath of hidden disloyalty; and it was on this dread that Cromwell based the fabric of his power. He was hardly secretary before spies were scattered broadcast over the land. Secret denunciations poured into the open ear of the minister. The air was thick with tales of plots and conspiracies, and with the detection and suppression of each Cromwell tightened his hold on the King. CHAP. VI. Thomas Cromwell 1530-1540.

As it was by terror that he mastered the King, so it was by terror that he mastered the people. Men felt in England, to use the figure by which Erasmus paints the time, "as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." The confessional had no secrets for Cromwell. Men's talk with their closest friends found its way to his ear. "Words idly spoken," the murmurs of a petulant abbot, the ravings of a moon-struck nun, were, as the nobles cried passionately at his fall, "tortured into treason." The only chance of safety lay in silence. "Friends who used to write and send me presents," Erasmus tells us, "now send neither letter nor gifts, nor receive any from any one, and this through fear." But even the refuge of silence was closed by a law more infamous than any that has ever blotted the Statute-book of England. Not only was thought made treason, but men were forced to reveal their thoughts on pain of their very silence being punished with the penalties of treason. All trust in the older bulwarks of liberty was destroyed by a policy as daring as it was unscrupulous. The noblest institutions were degraded into instruments of terror. Though Wolsey had strained the law to the utmost he had made no open attack on the freedom of justice. If he shrank from assembling Parliaments it was from his sense that they were the bulwarks of liberty. But under Cromwell the coercion of juries and the management of judges rendered the courts mere mouthpieces of the royal will: and where even this shadow of justice proved an obstacle to bloodshed, Parliament was brought into play to pass bill after

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1530-1540.

bill of attainder. "He shall be judged by the bloody laws he has himself made," was the cry of the Council at the moment of his fall, and by a singular retribution the crowning injustice which he sought to introduce even into the practice of attainder, the condemnation of a man without hearing his defence, was only practised on himself.

Cromwell's Temper.

But ruthless as was the Terror of Cromwell it was of a nobler type than the Terror of France. He never struck uselessly or capriciously, or stooped to the meaner victims of the guillotine. His blows were effective just because he chose his victims from among the noblest and the best. If he struck at the Church, it was through the Carthusians, the holiest and the most renowned of English Churchmen. If he struck at the baronage, it was through Lady Salisbury, in whose veins flowed the blood of kings. If he struck at the New Learning, it was through the murder of Sir Thomas More. But no personal vindictiveness mingled with his crime. In temper indeed, so far as we can judge from the few stories which lingered among his friends, he was a generous, kindly-hearted man, with pleasant and winning manners which atoned for a certain awkwardness of person, and with a constancy of friendship which won him a host of devoted adherents. But no touch either of love or hate swayed him from his course. The student of Machiavelli had not studied the "Prince" in vain. He had reduced bloodshed to a system. Fragments of his papers still show us with what a business-like brevity he ticked off human lives among the casual "remembrances" of the day. "Item, the Abbot of Reading to be sent down to be tried and executed at Reading." "Item, to know the King's pleasure touching Master More." "Item, when Master Fisher shall go to his execution, and the other." It is indeed this utter absence of all passion, of all personal feeling, that makes the figure of Cromwell the most terrible in our history. He has an absolute faith in the end he is pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it as a woodman hews his way through the forest, axe in hand.

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

1530-1540.

Cromwell and More.

The choice of his first victim showed the ruthless precision with which Cromwell was to strike. In the general opinion of Europe the foremost Englishman of the time was Sir Thomas More. As the policy of the divorce ended in an open rupture with Rome he had withdrawn silently from the ministry, but his silent disapproval of the new policy was more telling than the opposition of obscurer foes. To Cromwell there must have been something specially galling in More's attitude of reserve. The religious reforms of the New Learning were being rapidly carried out, but it was plain that the man who represented the very life of the New Learning believed that the sacrifice of liberty and justice was too dear a price to pay even for religious reform. In the actual changes which the divorce brought about there was nothing to move More to active or open opposition, Though he looked on the divorce and re-marriage as without religious warrant, he found no difficulty in accepting an Act of Succession passed in 1534 which declared the marriage of Anne Boleyn valid, annulled the title of Catharine's child, Mary, and declared the children of Anne the only lawful heirs to the crown. His faith in the power of Parliament over all civil matters was too complete to admit a doubt of its competence to regulate the succession to the throne. But by the same Act an oath recognizing the succession as then arranged was ordered to be taken by all persons; and this oath contained an acknowledgement that the marriage with Catharine was against Scripture and invalid from the beginning. Henry had long known More's belief on this point; and the summons to take this oath was simply a summons to death. More was at his house at Chelsea when the summons called him to Lambeth, to the house where he had bandied fun with Warham and Erasmus or bent over the easel of Holbein. For a moment there may have been some passing impulse to yield. But it was soon over. Triumphant in all else, the monarchy was to find its power stop short at the conscience of man. The great

IV. battle of spiritual freedom, the battle of the Protestant against Mary, of the Catholic against Elizabeth, of the Puritan against Charles, of the Independent against the Presbyterian, began at the moment when More refused to bend or to deny his convictions at a king's bidding.

"I thank the Lord," More said with a sudden start as the boat dropped silently down the river from his garden steps in the early morning, "I thank the Lord that the field is won." At Lambeth Cranmer and his fellow commissioners tendered to him the new oath of allegiance; but, as they expected, it was refused. They bade him walk in the garden that he might reconsider his reply. The day was hot and More seated himself in a window from which he could look down into the crowded court. Even in the presence of death the quick sympathy of his nature could enjoy the humour and life of the throng below. "I saw," he said afterwards, "Master Latimer very merry in the court, for he laughed and took one or twain by the neck so handsomely that if they had been women I should have weened that he waxed wanton." The crowd below was chiefly of priests, rectors, and vicars, pressing to take the oath that More found harder than death. He bore them no grudge for it. When he heard the voice of one who was known to have boggled hard at the oath a little while before calling loudly and ostentatiously for drink, he only noted him with his peculiar humour. "He drank," More supposed, "either from dryness or from gladness" or "to show quod ille notus erat Pontifici." He was called in again at last, but only repeated his refusal. It was in vain that Cranmer plied him with distinctions which perplexed even the subtle wit of the ex-chancellor; More remained unshaken and passed to the Tower. He was followed there by Bishop Fisher of Rochester, the most aged and venerable of the English prelates, who was charged with countenancing treason by listening to the prophecies of a religious fanatic called "The Nun of Kent." But for the moment even Cromwell

shrank from their blood. They remained prisoners while a new and more terrible engine was devised to crush out the silent but widespread opposition to the religious changes.

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529–1540.

Death of More.

By a statute passed at the close of 1534 a new treason was created in the denial of the King's titles; and in the opening of 1535 Henry assumed as we have seen the title of "on earth supreme head of the Church of England." The measure was at once followed up by a blow at victims hardly less venerable than More. In the general relaxation of the religious life the charity and devotion of the brethren of the Charter-house had won the reverence even of those who condemned monasticism. After a stubborn resistance they had acknowledged the royal Supremacy and taken the oath of submission prescribed by the Act. But by an infamous construction of the statute which made the denial of the Supremacy treason, the refusal of satisfactory answers to official questions as to a conscientious belief in it was held to be equivalent to open denial. The aim of the new measure was well known, and the brethren prepared to die. In the agony of waiting enthusiasm brought its imaginative consolations; "when the Host was lifted up there came as it were a whisper of air which breathed upon our faces as we knelt; and there came a sweet soft sound of music." They had not long however to wait, for their refusal to answer was the signal for their doom. Three of the brethren went to the gallows; the rest were flung into Newgate, chained to posts in a noisome dungeon where, "tied and not able to stir," they were left to perish of gaol-fever and starvation. In a fortnight five were dead and the rest at the point of death, "almost despatched," Cromwell's envoy wrote to him, "by the hand of God, of which, considering their behaviour, I am not sorry." Their death was soon followed by that of More. The interval of imprisonment had failed to break his resolution, and the new statute sufficed to bring him to the block. With Fisher he was convicted of denying the king's title as only

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540.

supreme head of the Church. The old Bishop approached the scaffold with a book of the New Testament in his hand. He opened it at a venture ere he knelt, and read, "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God." In July More followed his fellow-prisoner to the block. Just before the fatal blow he moved his beard carefully from the reach of the doomsman's axe. "Pity that should be cut," he was heard to mutter with a touch of the old sad irony, "that has never committed treason."

Cromwell and the Nobles.

Cromwell had at last reached his aim. England lay panic-stricken at the feet of the "low-born knave," as the nobles called him, who represented the omnipotence of the crown. Like Wolsey he concentrated in his hands the whole administration of the state; he was at once foreign minister and home minister, and vicar-general of the Church, the creator of a new fleet, the organizer of armies, the president of the terrible Star Chamber. His Italian indifference to the mere show of power stood out in strong contrast with the pomp of the Cardinal. Cromwell's personal habits were simple and unostentatious; if he clutched at money, it was to feed the army of spies whom he maintained at his own expense, and whose work he surveyed with a ceaseless vigilance. For his activity was boundless. More than fifty volumes remain of the gigantic mass of his correspondence. Thousands of letters from "poor bedesmen," from outraged wives and wronged labourers and persecuted heretics flowed in to the all-powerful minister whose system of personal government turned him into the universal court of appeal. But powerful as he was, and mighty as was the work which he had accomplished, he knew that harder blows had to be struck before his position was secure. The new changes, above all the irritation which had been caused by the outrages with which the dissolution of the monasteries was accompanied, gave point to the mutinous temper that prevailed throughout the country; for the revolution in agriculture was still going on, and evictions furnished em-

bittered outcasts to swell the ranks of any rising. Nor did it seem as though revolt, if it once broke out, would want leaders to head it. The nobles who had writhed under the rule of the Cardinal, writhed yet more bitterly under the rule of one whom they looked upon not only as Wolsey's tool, but as a low-born upstart. "The world will never mend," Lord Hussey had been heard to say, "till we fight for it." "Knaves rule about the king!" cried Lord Exeter, "I trust some day to give them a buffet!" At this moment too the hopes of political reaction were stirred by the fate of one whom the friends of the old order looked upon as the source of all their troubles. In the spring of 1536, while the dissolution of the monasteries was marking the triumph of the new policy, Anne Boleyn was suddenly charged with adultery, and sent to the Tower. A few days later she was tried, condemned, and brought to the block. The Queen's ruin was everywhere taken as an omen of ruin to the cause which had become identified with her own, and the old nobility mustered courage to face the minister who held them at his feet.

CHAP. IV.
Thomas Cromwell.
1530–1540.

Pilgrimage of Grace.

They found their opportunity in the discontent of the north, where the monasteries had been popular, and where the rougher mood of the people turned easily to resistance. In the autumn of 1536 a rising broke out in Lincolnshire, and this was hardly quelled when all Yorkshire rose in arms. From every parish the farmers marched with the parish priest at their head upon York, and the surrender of this city determined the waverers. In a few days Skipton Castle, where the Earl of Cumberland held out with a handful of men, was the only spot north of the Humber which remained true to the King. Durham rose at the call of the chiefs of the house of Neville, Lords Westmoreland and Latimer. Though the Earl of Northumberland feigned sickness, the Percies joined the revolt. Lord Darcy, the chief of the Yorkshire nobles, surrendered Pomfret, and was acknowledged as their chief by the insurgents. The whole nobility

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

of the north were now enlisted in the "Pilgrimage of Grace," as the rising called itself, and thirty thousand "tall men and well horsed" moved on the Don demanding the reversal of the royal policy, a reunion with Rome, the restoration of Catharine's daughter, Mary, to her rights as heiress of the Crown, redress for the wrongs done to the Church, and above all the driving away of base-born councillors, or in other words, the fall of Cromwell. Though their advance was checked by negotiation, the organization of the revolt went steadily on throughout the winter, and a Parliament of the North which gathered at Pomfret formally adopted the demands of the insurgents. Only six thousand men under Norfolk barred their way southward, and the Midland counties were known to be disaffected.

Its Suppression.

But Cromwell remained undaunted by the peril. He suffered indeed Norfolk to negotiate; and allowed Henry under pressure from his Council to promise pardon and a free Parliament at York, a pledge which Norfolk and Dacre alike construed into an acceptance of the demands made by the insurgents. Their leaders at once flung aside the badge of the Five Wounds which they had worn with a cry, "We will wear no badge but that of our Lord the King," and nobles and farmers dispersed to their homes in triumph. But the towns of the North were no sooner garrisoned and Norfolk's army in the heart of Yorkshire than the veil was flung aside. A few isolated outbreaks in the spring of 1537 gave a pretext for the withdrawal of every concession. The arrest of the leaders of the "Pilgrimage of Grace" was followed by ruthless severities. The country was covered with gibbets. Whole districts were given up to military execution. But it was on the leaders of the rising that Cromwell's hand fell heaviest. He seized his opportunity for dealing at the northern nobles a fatal blow. "Cromwell," one of the chief among them broke fiercely out as he stood at the Council board, "it is thou that art the very special and chief cause of all this rebellion and wickedness, and dost daily travail

to bring us to our ends and strike off our heads. I trust that ere thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblest heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet there shall one head remain that shall strike off thy head." But the warning was unheeded. Lord Darcy, who stood first among the nobles of Yorkshire, and Lord Hussey, who stood first among the nobles of Lincolnshire, went alike to the block. The Abbot of Barlings, who had ridden into Lincoln with his canons in full armour, swung with his brother Abbots of Whalley, Woburn, and Sawley from the gallows. The Abbots of Fountains and of Jervaulx were hanged at Tyburn side by side with the representative of the great line of Percy. Lady Bulmer was burned at the stake. Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains before the gate of Hull.

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

Ireland.

The defeat of the northern revolt showed the immense force which the monarchy had gained. Even among the rebels themselves not a voice had threatened Henry's throne. It was not at the King that they aimed these blows, but at the "low-born knaves" who stood about the King. At this moment too Henry's position was strengthened by the birth of an heir. On the death of Anne Boleyn he had married Jane Seymour, the daughter of a Wiltshire knight; and in 1537 this Queen died in giving birth to a boy, the future Edward the Sixth. The triumph of the Crown at home was doubled by its triumph in the great dependency which had so long held the English authority at bay, across St. George's Channel. Though Henry the Seventh had begun the work of bridling Ireland he had no strength for exacting a real submission; and the great Norman lords of the Pale, the Butlers and Geraldines, the De la Poers and the Fitzpatricks, though subjects in name, remained in fact defiant of the royal authority. In manners and outer seeming they had sunk into mere natives; their feuds were as incessant as those of the Irish septs; and their despotism combined the horrors of feudal oppression with those of Celtic anarchy.

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540. — Crushed by taxation, by oppression, by misgovernment, plundered alike by native marauders and by the troops levied to disperse them, the wretched descendants of the first English settlers preferred even Irish misrule to English "order," and the border of the Pale retreated steadily towards Dublin. The towns of the seaboard, sheltered by their walls and their municipal self-government, formed the only exceptions to the general chaos; elsewhere throughout its dominions the English Government, though still strong enough to break down any open revolt, was a mere phantom of rule. From the Celtic tribes without the Pale even the remnant of civilization and of native union which had lingered on to the time of Strongbow had vanished away. The feuds of the Irish septs were as bitter as their hatred of the stranger; and the Government at Dublin found it easy to maintain a strife which saved it the necessity of self-defence among a people whose "nature is such that for money one shall have the son to war against the father, and the father against his child." During the first thirty years of the sixteenth century the annals of the country which remained under native rule record more than a hundred raids and battles between clans of the north alone.

Ireland and Cromwell. But the time came at last for a vigorous attempt on the part of England to introduce order into this chaos of turbulence and misrule. To Henry the Eighth the policy of forbearance, of ruling Ireland through the great Irish lords, was utterly hateful. His purpose was to rule in Ireland as thoroughly and effectively as he ruled in England, and during the latter half of his reign he bent his whole energies to accomplish this aim. From the first hour of his accession indeed the Irish lords felt the heavier hand of a master. The Geraldines, who had been suffered under the preceding reign to govern Ireland in the name of the Crown, were quick to discover that the Crown would no longer stoop to be their tool. Their head, the Earl of Kildare, was called to England and thrown into

the Tower. The great house resolved to frighten England again into a conviction of its helplessness; and a rising of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald in 1534 followed the usual fashion of Irish revolts. A murder of the Archbishop of Dublin, a capture of the city, a repulse before its castle, a harrying of the Pale, ended in a sudden disappearance of the rebels among the bogs and forests of the border on the advance of the English forces. It had been usual to meet such an onset as this by a raid of the same character, by a corresponding failure before the castle of the rebellious noble, and a retreat like his own which served as a preliminary to negotiations and a compromise. Unluckily for the Fitzgeralds Henry resolved to take Ireland seriously in hand, and he had Cromwell to execute his will. Skeffington, a new Lord Deputy who was sent over in 1535, brought with him a train of artillery which worked a startling change in the political aspect of the island. The castles that had hitherto sheltered rebellion were battered into ruins. Maynooth, a stronghold from which the Geraldines threatened Dublin and ruled the Pale at their will, was beaten down in a fortnight. So crushing and unforeseen was the blow that resistance was at once at an end. Not only was the power of the great Norman house which had towered over Ireland utterly broken, but only a single boy was left to preserve its name.

Conquest of Ireland.

With the fall of the Fitzgeralds Ireland felt itself in a master's grasp. "Irishmen," wrote one of the Lord Justices to Cromwell, "were never in such fear as now. The King's sessions are being kept in five shires more than formerly." Not only were the Englishmen of the Pale at Henry's feet but the kerns of Wicklow and Wexford sent in their submission; and for the first time in men's memory an English army appeared in Munster and reduced the south to obedience. The border of the Pale was crossed, and the wide territory where the Celtic tribes had preserved their independence since the days of the Angevins was trampled into subjection. A castle of the

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

O'Briens which guarded the passage of the Shannon wa taken by assault, and its fall carried with it the sub mission of Clare. The capture of Athlone brought abou the reduction of Connaught, and assured the loyalty o the great Norman house of the De Burghs or Bourkes wh had assumed an almost royal authority in the west. Th resistance of the tribes of the north was broken in a victory at Bellahoe. In seven years, partly through the vigour o Skeffington's successor, Lord Leonard Grey, and still more through the resolute will of Henry and Cromwell, the power of the Crown, which had been limited to the walls of Dublin, was acknowledged over the length and breadth of the land.

Henry's Irish Government.

But submission was far from being all that Henry desired. His aim was to civilize the people whom he had conquered—to rule not by force but by law. But the only conception of law which the King or his ministers could frame was that of English law. The customary law which prevailed without the Pale, the native system of clan government and common tenure of land by the tribe, as well as the poetry and literature which threw their lustre over the Irish tongue, were either unknown to the English statesmen or despised by them as barbarous. The one mode of civilizing Ireland and redressing its chaotic misrule which presented itself to their minds was that of destroying the whole Celtic tradition of the Irish people—that of "making Ireland English" in manners, in law, and in tongue. The Deputy, Parliament, Judges, Sheriffs, which already existed within the Pale, furnished a faint copy of English institutions; and it was hoped that these might be gradually extended over the whole island. The English language and mode of life would follow, it was believed, the English law. The one effectual way of bringing about such a change as this lay in a complete conquest of the island, and in its colonization by English settlers; but from this course, pressed on him as it was by his own lieutenants and by the settlers of the Pale, even the

iron will of Cromwell shrank. It was at once too bloody and too expensive. * To win over the chiefs, to turn them by policy and a patient generosity into English nobles, to use the traditional devotion of their tribal dependants as a means of diffusing the new civilization of their chiefs, to trust to time and steady government for the gradual reformation of the country, was a policy safer, cheaper, more humane, and more statesmanlike.

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529-1540.

It was this system which, even before the fall of the Geraldines, Henry had resolved to adopt; and it was this that he pressed on Ireland when the conquest laid it at his feet. The chiefs were to be persuaded of the advantages of justice and legal rule. Their fear of any purpose to "expel them from their lands and dominions lawfully possessed" was to be dispelled by a promise "to conserve them as their own." Even their remonstrances against the introduction of English law were to be regarded, and the course of justice to be enforced or mitigated according to the circumstances of the country In the resumption of lands or rights which clearly belonged to the Crown "sober ways, politic shifts, and amiable persuasions" were to be preferred to rigorous dealing. It was this system of conciliation which was in the main carried out by the English Government under Henry and his two successors. Chieftain after chieftain was won over to the acceptance of the indenture which guaranteed him in the possession of his lands and left his authority over his tribesmen untouched on condition of a pledge of loyalty, of abstinence from illegal wars and exactions on his fellow-subjects, and of rendering a fixed tribute and service in war-time to the Crown. The sole test of loyalty demanded was the acceptance of an English title and the education of a son at the English court; though in some cases, like that of the O'Neills, a promise was exacted to use the English language and dress, and to encourage tillage and husbandry. Compliance with conditions such as these was procured not merely by the terror of the royal name but

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

[illegible]-1540.

by heavy bribes. The chieftains in fact profited greatly by the change. Not only were the lands of the suppressed abbeys granted to them on their assumption of their new titles, but the English law-courts, ignoring the Irish custom by which the land belonged to the tribe at large, regarded the chiefs as the sole proprietors of the soil. The merits of the system were unquestionable; its faults were such as a statesman of that day could hardly be expected to perceive. The Tudor politicians held that the one hope for the regeneration of Ireland lay in its absorbing the civilization of England. The prohibition of the national dress, customs, laws, and language must have seemed to them merely the suppression of a barbarism which stood in the way of all improvement.

Cromwell's Reform of Religion.

With England and Ireland alike at his feet Cromwell could venture on a last and crowning change. He could claim for the monarchy the right of dictating at its pleasure the form of faith and doctrine to be taught throughout the land. Henry had remained true to the standpoint of the New Learning; and the sympathies of Cromwell were mainly with those of his master. They had no wish for any violent break with the ecclesiastical forms of the past. They desired religious reform rather than religious revolution, a simplification of doctrine rather than any radical change in it, the purification of worship rather than the introduction of any wholly new ritual. Their theology remained, as they believed, a Catholic theology, but a theology cleared of the superstitious growths which obscured the true Catholicism of the early Church. In a word their dream was the dream of Erasmus and Colet. The spirit of Erasmus was seen in the Articles of religion which were laid before Convocation in 1536, in the acknowledgement of Justification by Faith, a doctrine for which the founders of the New Learning, such as Contarini and Pole, were struggling at Rome itself, in the condemnation of purgatory, of pardons, and of masses for the dead, as it was seen in the admission of prayers for the dead and

Thomas Cromwell.

1530-1540.

in the retention of the ceremonies of the church without material change. A series of royal injunctions which followed carried out the same policy of reform. Pilgrimages were suppressed; the excessive number of holy days was curtailed; the worship of images and relics was discouraged in words which seem almost copied from the protest of Erasmus. His appeal for a translation of the Bible which weavers might repeat at their shuttle and ploughmen sing at their plough received at last a reply. At the outset of the ministry of Norfolk and More the King had promised an English version of the scriptures, while prohibiting the circulation of Tyndale's Lutheran translation. The work however lagged in the hands of the bishops; and as a preliminary measure the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were now rendered into English, and ordered to be taught by every schoolmaster and father of a family to his children and pupils. But the bishops' version still hung on hand; till in despair of its appearance a friend of Archbishop Cranmer, Miles Coverdale, was employed to correct and revise the translation of Tyndale; and the Bible which he edited was published in 1538 under the avowed patronage of Henry himself.

The Lutheran Alliance.

But the force of events was already carrying England far from the standpoint of Erasmus or More. The dream of the New Learning was to be wrought out through the progress of education and piety. In the policy of Cromwell reform was to be brought about by the brute force of the Monarchy. The story of the royal supremacy was graven even on the titlepage of the new Bible. It is Henry on his throne who gives the sacred volume to Cranmer, ere Cranmer and Cromwell can distribute it to the throng of priests and laymen below. Hitherto men had looked on religious truth as a gift from the Church. They were now to look on it as a gift from the King. The very gratitude of Englishmen for fresh spiritual enlightenment was to tell to the profit of the royal power. No conception could be further from that of the New

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

Learning, from the plea for intellectual freedom which runs through the life of Erasmus or the craving for political liberty which gives nobleness to the speculations of More. Nor was it possible for Henry himself to avoid drifting from the standpoint he had chosen. He had written against Luther; he had persisted in opposing Lutheran doctrine; he had passed new laws to hinder the circulation of Lutheran books in his realm. But influences from without as from within drove him nearer to Lutheranism. If the encouragement of Francis had done somewhat to bring about his final breach with the Papacy, he soon found little will in the French King to follow him in any course of separation from Rome; and the French alliance threatened to become useless as a shelter against the wrath of the Emperor. Charles was goaded into action by the bill annulling Mary's right of succession; and in 1535 he proposed to unite his house with that of Francis by close intermarriage and to sanction Mary's marriage with a son of the French King, if Francis would join in an attack on England. Whether such a proposal was serious or no, Henry had to dread attack from Charles himself and to look for new allies against it. He was driven to offer his alliance to the Lutheran princes of North Germany, who dreaded like himself the power of the Emperor, and who were now gathering in the League of Schmalkald.

The Articles of 1536.

But the German Princes made agreement as to doctrine a condition of their alliance; and their pressure was backed by Henry's partizans among the clergy at home. In Cromwell's scheme for mastering the priesthood it had been needful to place men on whom the King could rely at their head. Cranmer became Primate, Latimer became Bishop of Worcester, Shaxton and Barlow were raised to the sees of Salisbury and St. David's, Hilsey to that of Rochester, Goodrich to that of Ely, Fox to that of Hereford. But it was hard to find men among the clergy who paused at Henry's theological resting-place; and of these prelates all except Latimer were known to sympathize with Luther-

anism, though Cranmer lagged far behind his fellows in their zeal for reform. The influence of these men as well as of an attempt to comply at least partly with the demand of the German Princes left its stamp on the Articles of 1536. For the principle of Catholicism, of a universal form of faith overspreading all temporal dominions, the Lutheran states had substituted the principle of territorial religion, of the right of each sovereign or people to determine the form of belief which should be held within their bounds. The severance from Rome had already brought Henry to this principle; and the Act of Supremacy was its emphatic assertion. In England too, as in North Germany, the repudiation of the Papal authority as a ground of faith, of the voice of the Pope as a declaration of truth, had driven men to find such a ground and declaration in the Bible; and the Articles expressly based the faith of the Church of England on the Bible and the three Creeds. With such fundamental principles of agreement it was possible to borrow from the Augsburg Confession five of the ten articles which Henry laid before the Convocation. If penance was still retained as a sacrament, baptism and the Lord's Supper were alone maintained to be sacraments with it; the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Henry stubbornly maintained differed so little from the doctrine maintained by Luther that the words of Lutheran formularies were borrowed to explain it; Confession was admitted by the Lutheran Churches as well as by the English The veneration of saints and the doctrine of prayer to them, though still retained, was so modified as to present little difficulty even to a Lutheran.

The Irish Churches.

However disguised in form, the doctrinal advance made in the Articles of 1536 was an immense one; and a vehement opposition might have been looked for from those of the bishops like Gardiner, who while they agreed with Henry's policy of establishing a national Church remained opposed to any change in faith. But the Articles had been drawn up by Henry's own hand, and all whisper of oppo-

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1530-1540.

sition was hushed. Bishops, abbots, clergy, not only subscribed to them, but carried out with implicit obedience the injunctions which put their doctrine roughly into practice; and the failure of the Pilgrimage of Grace in the following autumn ended all thought of resistance among the laity. But Cromwell found a different reception for his reforms when he turned to extend them to the sister island. The religious aspect of Ireland was hardly less chaotic than its political aspect had been. Ever since Strongbow's landing there had been no one Irish Church, simply because there had been no one Irish nation. There was not the slightest difference in doctrine or discipline between the Church without the Pale and the Church within it. But within the Pale the clergy were exclusively of English blood and speech, and without it they were exclusively of Irish. Irishmen were shut out by law from abbeys and churches within the English boundary; and the ill-will of the natives shut out Englishmen from churches and abbeys outside it. As to the religious state of the country, it was much on a level with its political condition. Feuds and misrule told fatally on ecclesiastical discipline. The bishops were political officers, or hard fighters like the chiefs around them; their sees were neglected, their cathedrals abandoned to decay. Through whole dioceses the churches lay in ruins and without priests. The only preaching done in the country was done by the begging friars, and the results of the friars' preaching were small. "If the King do not provide a remedy," it was said in 1525, "there will be no more Christentie than in the middle of Turkey."

Ireland and the Supremacy.

Unfortunately the remedy which Henry provided was worse than the disease. Politically Ireland was one with England, and the great revolution which was severing the one country from the Papacy extended itself naturally to the other. The results of it indeed at first seemed small enough. The Supremacy, a question which had convulsed England, passed over into Ireland to meet its only obstacle

in a general indifference. Everybody was ready to accept it without a thought of the consequences. The bishops and clergy within the Pale bent to the King's will as easily as their fellows in England, and their example was followed by at least four prelates of dioceses without the Pale. The native chieftains made no more scruple than the Lords of the Council in renouncing obedience to the Bishop of Rome, and in acknowledging Henry as the "Supreme Head of the Church of England and Ireland under Christ." There was none of the resistance to the dissolution of the abbeys which had been witnessed on the other side of the Channel, and the greedy chieftains showed themselves perfectly willing to share the plunder of the Church. But the results of the measure were fatal to the little culture and religion which even the past centuries of disorder had spared. Such as they were, the religious houses were the only schools that Ireland contained. The system of vicars, so general in England, was rare in Ireland; churches in the patronage of the abbeys were for the most part served by the religious themselves, and the dissolution of their houses suspended public worship over large districts of the country. The friars, hitherto the only preachers, and who continued to labour and teach in spite of the efforts of the Government, were thrown necessarily into a position of antagonism to the English rule.

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

Ireland and the Religious Changes.

Had the ecclesiastical changes which were forced on the country ended here however, in the end little harm would have been done. But in England the breach with Rome, the destruction of the monastic orders, and the establishment of the Supremacy, had roused in a portion of the people itself a desire for theological change which Henry shared and was cautiously satisfying. In Ireland the spirit of the Reformation never existed among the people at all. They accepted the legislative measures passed in the English Parliament without any dream of theological consequences or of any change in the doctrine

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. 1529–1540.

or ceremonies of the Church. Not a single voice demanded the abolition of pilgrimages, or the destruction of images, or the reform of public worship. The mission of Archbishop Browne in 1535 "for the plucking down of idols and extinguishing of idolatry" was a first step in the long effort of the English Government to force a new faith on a people who to a man clung passionately to their old religion. Browne's attempts at "tuning the pulpits" were met by a sullen and significant opposition. "Neither by gentle exhortation," the Archbishop wrote to Cromwell, "nor by evangelical instruction, neither by oath of them solemnly taken, nor yet by threats of sharp correction may I persuade or induce any whether religious or secular since my coming over once to preach the Word of God nor the just title of our illustrious Prince." Even the acceptance of the Supremacy, which had been so quietly effected, was brought into question when its results became clear. The bishops abstained from compliance with the order to erase the Pope's name out of their mass-books. The pulpits remained steadily silent. When Browne ordered the destruction of the images and relics in his own cathedral, he had to report that the prior and canons "find them so sweet for their gain that they heed not my words." Cromwell however was resolute for a religious uniformity between the two islands, and the Primate borrowed some of his patron's vigour. Recalcitrant priests were thrown into prison, images were plucked down from the rood-loft, and the most venerable of Irish relics, the staff of St. Patrick, was burned in the market-place. But he found no support in his vigour save from across the Channel. The Irish Council looked coldly on; even the Lord Deputy still knelt to say prayers before an image at Trim. A sullen dogged opposition baffled Cromwell's efforts, and their only result was to unite all Ireland against the Crown.

The English Protestants.

But Cromwell found it easier to deal with Irish inaction than with the feverish activity which his reforms stirred in England itself. It was impossible to strike blow after blow

at the Church without rousing wild hopes in the party who sympathized with the work which Luther was doing over-sea. Few as these 'Lutherans' or 'Protestants' still were in numbers, their new hopes made them a formidable force; and in the school of persecution they had learned a violence which delighted in outrages on the faith which had so long trampled them under foot. At the very outset of Cromwell's changes four Suffolk youths broke into a church at Dovercourt, tore down a wonder-working crucifix, and burned it in the fields. The suppression of the lesser monasteries was the signal for a new outburst of ribald insult to the old religion. The roughness, insolence, and extortion of the Commissioners sent to effect it drove the whole monastic body to despair. Their servants rode along the road with copes for doublets or tunicles for saddle-cloths, and scattered panic among the larger houses which were left. Some sold their jewels and relics to provide for the evil day they saw approaching. Some begged of their own will for dissolution. It was worse when fresh ordinances of the Vicar-General ordered the removal of objects of superstitious veneration. Their removal, bitter enough to those whose religion twined itself around the image or the relic which was taken away, was embittered yet more by the insults with which it was accompanied. A miraculous rood at Boxley, which bowed its head and stirred its eyes, was paraded from market to market and exhibited as a juggle before the Court. Images of the Virgin were stripped of their costly vestments and sent to be publicly burned at London. Latimer forwarded to the capital the figure of Our Lady, which he had thrust out of his cathedral church at Worcester, with rough words of scorn: "She with her old sister of Walsingham, her younger sister of Ipswich, and their two other sisters of Doncaster and Penrice, would make a jolly muster at Smithfield." Fresh orders were given to fling all relics from their reliquaries, and to level every shrine with the ground. In 1538 the bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury

CHAP. IV.

Thomas Cromwell.

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were torn from the stately shrine which had been the glory of his metropolitan church, and his name was erased from the service-books as that of a traitor.

The introduction of the English Bible into churches gave a new opening for the zeal of the Protestants. In spite of royal injunctions that it should be read decently and without comment, the young zealots of the party prided themselves on shouting it out to a circle of excited hearers during the service of mass, and accompanied their reading with violent expositions. Protestant maidens took the new English primer to church with them and studied it ostentatiously during matins. Insult passed into open violence when the Bishops' Courts were invaded and broken up by Protestant mobs; and law and public opinion were outraged at once when priests who favoured the new doctrines began openly to bring home wives to their vicarages. A fiery outburst of popular discussion compensated for the silence of the pulpits. The new Scriptures, in Henry's bitter words of complaint, were "disputed, rimed, sung, and jangled in every tavern and alehouse." The articles which dictated the belief of the English Church roused a furious controversy. Above all, the Sacrament of the Mass, the centre of the Catholic system of faith and worship, and which still remained sacred to the bulk of Englishmen, was attacked with a scurrility and profaneness which passes belief. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was as yet recognized by law, was held up to scorn in ballads and mystery plays. In one church a Protestant lawyer raised a dog in his hands when the priest elevated the Host. The most sacred words of the old worship, the words of consecration, "Hoc est corpus," were travestied into a nickname for jugglery as "Hocus-pocus."

The Six Articles.

It was by this attack on the Mass, even more than by the other outrages, that the temper both of Henry and the nation was stirred to a deep resentment. With the Protestants Henry had no sympathy whatever. He was a man of the New Learning; he was proud of his orthodoxy.

[illegible] his title of Defender of the Faith. And above all he shared to the utmost his people's love of order, their clinging to the past, their hatred of extravagance and excess. The first sign of reaction was seen in the Parliament of 1539. Never had the Houses shown so little care for political liberty. The Monarchy seemed to free itself from all parliamentary restrictions whatever when a formal statute gave the King's proclamations the force of parliamentary laws. Nor did the Church find favour with them. No word of the old opposition was heard when a bill was introduced granting to the King the greater monasteries which had been saved in 1536. More than six hundred religious houses fell at a blow, and so great was the spoil that the King promised never again to call on his people for subsidies. But the Houses were equally at one n withstanding the new innovations in religion, and an ıct for "*abolishing diversity of opinions in certain articles* oncerning Christian religion" passed with general assent.)n the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was re-asserted y the first of six Articles to which the Act owes its usual ame, there was no difference of feeling or belief between he men of the New Learning and the older Catholics. ut the road to a further instalment of even moderate form seemed closed by the five other articles which sanconed communion in one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, onastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. more terrible feature of the reaction was the revival of ersecution. Burning was denounced as the penalty for a enial of transubstantiation; on a second offence it became e penalty for an infraction of the other five doctrines. refusal to confess or to attend Mass was made felony. was in vain that Cranmer, with the five bishops who artially sympathized with the Protestants, struggled gainst the bill in the Lords: the Commons were "all of ne opinion," and Henry himself acted as spokesman on e side of the articles. In London alone five hundred rotestants were indicted under the new act. Latimer and

CHAP. IV. — Thomas Cromwell. — 1529–1540.

Shaxton were imprisoned, and the former forced into a resignation of his see. Cranmer himself was only saved by Henry's personal favour.

Cromwell's last Struggle.

But the first burst of triumph was no sooner spent than the hand of Cromwell made itself felt. Though his opinions remained those of the New Learning and differed little from the general sentiment which found itself represented in the act, he leaned instinctively to the one party which did not long for his fall. His wish was to restrain the Protestant excesses, but he had no mind to ruin the Protestants. In a little time therefore the bishops were quietly released. The London indictments were quashed. The magistrates were checked in their enforcement of the law, while a general pardon cleared the prisons of the heretics who had been arrested under its provisions. A few months after the enactment of the Six Articles we find from a Protestant letter that persecution had wholly ceased, "the Word is powerfully preached and books of every kind may safely be exposed for sale" Never indeed had Cromwell shown such greatness as in his last struggle against Fate. "Beknaved" by the King, whose confidence in him waned as he discerned the full meaning of the religious changes which Cromwell had brought about, met too by a growing opposition in the Council as his favour declined, the temper of the man remained indomitable as ever. He stood absolutely alone. Wolsey, hated as he had been by the nobles, had been supported by the Church; but Churchmen hated Cromwell with an even fiercer hate than the nobles themselves. His only friends were the Protestants, and their friendship was more fatal than the hatred of his foes. But he showed no signs of fear or of halting in the course he had entered on. So long as Henry supported him, however reluctant his support might be, he was more than a match for his foes. He was strong enough to expel his chief opponent, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, from the royal Council. He met the hostility of the nobles with a threat which marked his

Chap. IV. *Thomas Cromwell.* *1529-1540.*

power. "If the lords would handle him so, he would give them such a breakfast as never was made in England, and that the proudest of them should know."

The Courtenays and the Poles.

He soon gave a terrible earnest of the way in which he could fulfil his threat. The opposition to his system gathered above all round two houses which represented what yet lingered of the Yorkist tradition, the Courtenays and the Poles. Courtenay, the Marquis of Exeter, was of royal blood, a grandson through his mother of Edward the Fourth. He was known to have bitterly denounced the "knaves that ruled about the King;" and his threats to "give them some day a buffet" were formidable in the mouth of one whose influence in the western counties was supreme. Margaret, the Countess of Salisbury, a daughter of the Duke of Clarence by the heiress of the Earl of Warwick, and a niece of Edward the Fourth, had married Sir Richard Pole, and became mother of Lord Montacute as of Sir Geoffry and Reginald Pole. The temper of her house might be guessed from the conduct of the younger of the three brothers. After refusing the highest favours from Henry as the price of his approval of the divorce, Reginald Pole had taken refuge at Rome, where he had bitterly attacked the King in a book on "The Unity of the Church." "There may be found ways enough in Italy," Cromwell wrote to him in significant words, "to rid a treacherous subject. When Justice can take no place by process of law at home, sometimes she may be enforced to take new means abroad." But he had left hostages in Henry's hands. "Pity that the folly of one witless fool," Cromwell wrote ominously, "should be the ruin of so great a family. Let him follow ambition as fast as he can, those that little have offended (saving that he is of their kin), were it not for the great mercy and benignity of the prince, should and might feel what it is to have such a traitor as their kinsman." The "great mercy and benignity of the prince" was no longer to shelter them. In 1538 the Pope, Paul the Third, published a bull of excommunication and deposition against

Henry, and Pole pressed the Emperor vigorously thou ineffectually to carry the bull into execution. His effor only brought about, as Cromwell had threatened, t ruin of his house. His brother Lord Montacute and t Marquis of Exeter, with other friends of the two gre families, were arrested on a charge of treason and execut in the opening of 1539, while the Countess of Salisbu was attainted in Parliament and sent to the Tower.

The Lutheran Marriage.

Almost as terrible an act of bloodshed closed the ye The abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester, m who had sate as mitred abbots among the lords, we charged with a denial of the King's supremacy a hanged as traitors. But Cromwell relied for success more than terror. His single will forced on a schen of foreign policy whose aim was to bind England to tl cause of the Reformation while it bound Henry helpless to his minister. The daring boast which his enemi laid afterwards to Cromwell's charge, whether utter or not, is but the expression of his system, "In bri time he would bring things to such a pass that the Ki with all his power should not be able to hinder hin His plans rested, like the plan which proved fatal Wolsey, on a fresh marriage of his master. Henry's thi wife, Jane Seymour, had died in child-birth; and in tl opening of 1540 Cromwell replaced her by a Germ consort, Anne of Cleves, a sister-in-law of the Luther elector of Saxony. He dared even to resist Henr caprice when the King revolted on their first intervie from the coarse features and unwieldy form of his ne bride. For the moment Cromwell had brought matte "to such a pass" that it was impossible to recoil fro the marriage, and the minister's elevation to the Earldo of Essex seemed to proclaim his success. The marriage Anne of Cleves however was but the first step in a poli which, had it been carried out as he designed it, wou have anticipated the triumphs of Richelieu. Charles a the House of Austria could alone bring about a Cathol

reaction strong enough to arrest and roll back the Reformation; and Cromwell was no sooner united with the princes of North Germany than he sought to league them with France for the overthrow of the Emperor.

CHAP. IV. Thomas Cromwell. 1529-1540.

Fall of Cromwell.

Had he succeeded, the whole face of Europe would have been changed, Southern Germany would have been secured for Protestantism, and the Thirty Years' War averted. But he failed as men fail who stand ahead of their age. The German princes shrank from a contest with the Emperor, France from a struggle which would be fatal to Catholicism; and Henry, left alone to bear the resentment of the House of Austria and chained to a wife he loathed, turned savagely on his minister. In June the long struggle came to an end. The nobles sprang on Cromwell with a fierceness that told of their long-hoarded hate. Taunts and execrations burst from the Lords at the Council table as the Duke of Norfolk, who had been entrusted with the minister's arrest, tore the ensign of the Garter from his neck. At the charge of treason Cromwell flung his cap on the ground with a passionate cry of despair. "This then," he exclaimed, "is my guerdon for the services I have done! On your consciences, I ask you, am I a traitor?" Then with a sudden sense that all was over he bade his foes make quick work, and not leave him to languish in prison. Quick work was made. A few days after his arrest he was attainted in Parliament, and at the close of July a burst of popular applause hailed his death on the scaffold.

BOOK VI.

THE REFORMATION.

1540—1603.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VI.

1540—1603.

For the close of Henry the Eighth's reign as for the reigns of Edward and Mary we possess copious materials. Strype covers this period in his "Memorials" and in his lives of Cranmer, Cheke, and Smith; Hayward's "Life of Edward the Sixth" may be supplemented by the young King's own Journal; "Machyn's Diary" gives us the aspect of affairs as they presented themselves to a common Englishman; while Holinshed is near enough to serve as a contemporary authority. The troubled period of the Protectorate is illustrated by Mr. Tytler in the correspondence which he has published in his "England under Edward the Sixth and Mary," while much light is thrown on its close by Mr. Nicholls in the "Chronicle of Queen Jane," published by the Camden Society. In spite of countless errors, of Puritan prejudices, and some deliberate suppressions of the truth, its mass of facts and wonderful charm of style will always give importance to the "Acts and Monuments" or "Book of Martyrs" of John Foxe, as a record of the Marian persecution. Among outer observers, the Venetian Soranzo throws some light on the Protectorate; and the despatches of Giovanni Michiel, published by Mr. Friedmann, give us a new insight into the events of Mary's reign.

For the succeeding reign we have a valuable contemporary account in Camden's "Life of Elizabeth." The "Annals" of Sir John Hayward refer to the first four years of the Queen's rule. Its political and diplomatic side is only now being fully unveiled in the Calendar of State Papers for this period, which are being issued by the Master of the Rolls, and fresh light has yet to be looked for from the Cecil Papers and the documents at Simancas, some of which are embodied in the history of this reign by Mr. Froude. Among the published materials for this time we have the Burleigh Papers, the Sidney Papers, the Sadler State Papers, much correspondence in the Hardwicke State Papers, the letters published by Mr. Wright in his "Elizabeth and her Times," the collections of Murdin, the Egerton Papers, the "Letters of Elizabeth and James the Sixth" published by Mr. Bruce. Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ" contain some details of value. Among foreign materials as yet published the "Papiers d'État" of Cardinal Granvelle and the series of French despatches published by M. Teulet

are among the more important. Mr. Motley in his "Rise of the Dutch Republic" and "History of the United Netherlands" has used the State Papers of the countries concerned in this struggle to pour a flood of new light on the diplomacy and outer policy of Burleigh and his mistress. His wide and independent research among the same class of documents gives almost an original value to Ranke's treatment of this period in his English History. The earlier religious changes in Scotland have been painted with wonderful energy, and on the whole with truthfulness, by Knox himself in his "History of the Reformation." Among the contemporary materials for the history of Mary Stuart we have the well known works of Buchanan and Leslie, Labanoff's "Lettres et Mémoires de Marie Stuart," the correspondence appended to Mignet's biography, Stevenson's "Illustrations of the Life of Queen Mary," Melville's Memoirs, and the collections of Keith and Anderson.

For the religious history of Elizabeth's reign Strype, as usual, gives us copious details in his "Annals," his lives of Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift. Some light is thrown on the Queen's earlier steps by the Zurich Letters published by the Parker Society. The strife with the later Puritans can only be fairly judged after reading the Martin Marprelate Tracts, which have been reprinted by Mr. Maskell, who has given a short abstract of the more important in his "History of the Martin Marprelate Controversy." Her policy towards the Catholics is set out in Burleigh's tract "The Execution of Justice in England, not for Religion, but for Treason," which was answered by Allen in his "Defense of the English Catholics." On the actual working of the penal laws much new information has been given us in the series of contemporary narratives published by Father Morris under the title of "The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers;" the general history of the Catholics may be found in the work of Dodd; and the sufferings of the Jesuits in More's "Historia Provinciæ Anglicanæ Societatis Jesu." To these may be added Mr. Simpson's biography of Campion. For our constitutional history during Elizabeth's reign we have D'Ewes' Journals and Townshend's "Journal of Parliamentary Proceedings from 1580 to 1601," the first detailed account we possess of the proceedings of the House of Commons. Macpherson in his Annals of Commerce gives details of the wonderful expansion of English trade during this period, and Hackluyt's collection of Voyages tells of its wonderful activity. Amidst a crowd of biographers, whose number marks the new importance of individual life and action at the time, we may note as embodying information elsewhere inaccessible the lives of Hatton and Davison by Sir Harris Nicolas, the three accounts of Raleigh by Oldys, Tytler, and Mr. Edwards, the Lives of the two Devereux, Earls of Essex, Mr Spedding's "Life of Bacon," and Barrow's "Life of Sir Francis Drake."

CHAPTER I.

THE PROTESTANT REVOLUTION.

1540—1553.

Cromwell and the Monarchy.

At the death of Cromwell the success of his policy was complete. The Monarchy had reached the height of its power. The old liberties of England lay prostrate at the feet of the King. The Lords were cowed and spiritless; the House of Commons was filled with the creatures of the Court and degraded into an engine of tyranny. Royal proclamations were taking the place of parliamentary legislation; royal benevolences were encroaching more and more on the right of parliamentary taxation. Justice was prostituted in the ordinary courts to the royal will, while the boundless and arbitrary powers of the royal Council were gradually superseding the slower processes of the Common Law. The religious changes had thrown an almost sacred character over the "majesty" of the King. Henry was the Head of the Church. From the primate to the meanest deacon every minister of it derived from him his sole right to exercize spiritual powers. The voice of its preachers was the echo of his will. He alone could define orthodoxy or declare heresy. The forms of its worship and belief were changed and rechanged at the royal caprice. Half of its wealth went to swell the royal treasury, and the other half lay at the King's mercy. It was this unpredecented concentration of all power in the hands of a single man that overawed the imagination of Henry's subjects. He was regarded as something high

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1558.

above the laws which govern common men. The voices of statesmen and priests extolled his wisdom and authority as more than human. The Parliament itself rose and bowed to the vacant throne when his name was mentioned. An absolute devotion to his person replaced the old loyalty to the law. When the Primate of the English Church described the chief merit of Cromwell, it was by asserting that he loved the King "no less than he loved God."

Cromwell and the Parliament.

It was indeed Cromwell who more than any man had reared this fabric of King-worship. But he had hardly reared it when it began to give way. The very success of his measures indeed brought about the ruin of his policy. One of the most striking features of Cromwell's system had been his developement of parliamentary action. The great assembly which the Monarchy had dreaded and silenced from the days of Edward the Fourth to the days of Wolsey had been called to the front again at the Cardinal's fall. Proud of his popularity, and conscious of his people's sympathy with him in his protest against a foreign jurisdiction, Henry set aside the policy of the Crown to deal a heavier blow at the Papacy. Both the parties represented in the ministry that followed Wolsey welcomed the change, for the nobles represented by Norfolk and the men of the New Learning represented by More regarded Parliament with the same favour. More indeed in significant though almost exaggerated phrases set its omnipotence face to face with the growing despotism of the Crown. The policy of Cromwell fell in with this revival of the two Houses. The daring of his temper led him not to dread and suppress national institutions, but to seize them and master them, and to turn them into means of enhancing the royal power. As he saw in the Church a means of raising the King into the spiritual ruler of the faith and consciences of his people, so he saw in the Parliament a means of shrouding the boldest aggressions of the monarchy under the veil of popular assent, and

CHAP. I.
The Protestant Revolution.
1540–1553.

of giving to the most ruthless acts of despotism the stamp and semblance of law. He saw nothing to fear in a House of Lords whose nobles cowered helpless before the might of the Crown, and whose spiritual members his policy was degrading into mere tools of the royal will. Nor could he find anything to dread in a House of Commons which was crowded with members directly or indirectly nominated by the royal Council. With a Parliament such as this Cromwell might well trust to make the nation itself through its very representatives an accomplice in the work of absolutism.

Growth of Parliamentary Power.

His trust seemed more than justified by the conduct of the Houses. It was by parliamentary statutes that the Church was prostrated at the feet of the Monarchy. It was by bills of attainder that great nobles were brought to the block. It was under constitutional forms that freedom was gagged with new treasons and oaths and questionings. One of the first bills of Cromwell's Parliaments freed Henry from the need of paying his debts, one of the last gave his proclamations the force of laws. In the action of the two Houses the Crown seemed to have discovered a means of carrying its power into regions from which a bare despotism has often had to shrink. Henry might have dared single-handed to break with Rome or to send Sir Thomas More to the block. But without Parliament to back him he could hardly have ventured on such an enormous confiscation of property as was involved in the suppression of the monasteries or on such changes in the national religion as were brought about by the Ten Articles and the Six. It was this discovery of the use to which the Houses could be turned that accounts for the immense developement of their powers, the immense widening of their range of action, which they owe to Cromwell. Now that the great engine was at his own command he used it as it had never been used before. Instead of rare and short assemblies of Parliament, England saw it gathered year after year. All the jealousy with which the Crown

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1653.

had watched its older encroachments on the prerogative was set aside. Matters which had even in the days of their greatest influence been scrupulously withheld from the cognizance of the Houses were now absolutely forced on their attention. It was by Parliament that England was torn from the great body of Western Christendom. It was by parliamentary enactment that the English Church was reft of its older liberties and made absolutely subservient to the Crown. It was a parliamentary statute that defined the very faith and religion of the land. The vastest confiscation of landed property which England had ever witnessed was wrought by Parliament. It regulated the succession to the throne. It decided on the validity of the King's marriages and the legitimacy of the King's children. Former sovereigns had struggled against the claim of the Houses to meddle with the royal ministers or with members of the royal household. Now Parliament was called on by the King himself to attaint his ministers and his Queens.

The New Nobles.

The fearlessness and completeness of such a policy as this brings home to us more than any other of his plans the genius of Cromwell. But its success depended wholly on the absolute servility of Parliament to the will of the Crown, and Cromwell's own action made the continuance of such a servility impossible The part which the Houses were to play in after years shows the importance of clinging to the forms of constitutional freedom, even when their life is all but lost. In the inevitable reaction against tyranny they furnish centres for the reviving energies of the people, while the returning tide of liberty is enabled through their preservation to flow quietly and naturally along its traditional channels. And even before Cromwell passed to his doom the tide of liberty was returning. On one occasion during his rule a "great debate" on the suppression of the lesser monasteries showed that elements of resistance still survived; and these elements developed rapidly as the power of the Crown de-

clined under the minority of Edward and the unpopularity of Mary. To this revival of a spirit of independence the spoliation of the Church largely contributed. Partly from necessity, partly from a desire to build up a faction interested in the maintenance of their ecclesiastical policy, Cromwell and the King squandered the vast mass of wealth which flowed into the Treasury from the dissolution of the monasteries with reckless prodigality. Three hundred and seventy-six smaller houses had been suppressed in 1536; six hundred and forty-five greater houses were surrendered or seized in 1539. Some of the spoil was devoted to the erection of six new bishopricks; a larger part went to the fortification of the coast. But the bulk of these possessions were granted lavishly away to the nobles and courtiers about the King, and to a host of adventurers who "had become gospellers for the abbey lands." Something like a fifth of the actual land in the kingdom was in this way transferred from the holding of the Church to that of nobles and gentry. Not only were the older houses enriched, but a new aristocracy was erected from among the dependants of the Court. The Russells and the Cavendishes are familiar instances of families which rose from obscurity through the enormous grants of Church-land made to Henry's courtiers. The old baronage was thus hardly crushed before a new aristocracy took its place. "Those families within or without the bounds of the peerage," observes Mr. Hallam, "who are now deemed the most considerable, will be found, with no great number of exceptions, to have first become conspicuous under the Tudor line of kings and, if we could trace the title of their estates, to have acquired no small portion of them mediately or immediately from monastic or other ecclesiastical foundations." The leading part which these freshly created peers took in the events which followed Henry's death gave strength and vigour to the whole order. But the smaller gentry shared in the general enrichment of the landed proprietors, and the new energy of the

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. — 1540-1553. —

Lords was soon followed by a display of political independence among the Commons themselves.

Results of the Religious Changes.

While the prodigality of Cromwell's system thus brought into being a new check upon the Crown by enriching the nobles and the lesser gentry, the religious changes it brought about gave fire and vigour to the elements of opposition which were slowly gathering. What did most to ruin the King-worship that Cromwell set up was Cromwell's ecclesiastical policy. In reducing the Church to mere slavery beneath the royal power he believed himself to be trampling down the last constitutional force which could hold the Monarchy in check. What he really did was to give life and energy to new forces which were bound from their very nature to battle with the Monarchy for even more than the old English freedom. When Cromwell seized on the Church he held himself to be seizing for the Crown the mastery which the Church had wielded till now over the consciences and reverence of men. But the very humiliation of the great religious body broke the spell beneath which Englishmen had bowed. In form nothing had been changed. The outer constitution of the Church remained utterly unaltered. The English bishop, freed from the papal control, freed from the check of monastic independence, seemed greater and more imposing than ever. The priest still clung to rectory and church. If images were taken out of churches, if here and there a rood-loft was pulled down or a saint's shrine demolished, no change was made in form of ritual or mode of worship. The mass was untouched. Every hymn, every prayer was still in Latin; confession,penance, fastings and feastings, extreme unction, went on as before. There was little to show that any change had taken place; and yet every ploughman felt that all was changed. The bishop, gorgeous as he might be in mitre and cope, was a mere tool of the King. The priest was trembling before heretics he used to burn. Farmer or shopkeeper might enter their church any Sunday morning to find mass or

service utterly transformed. The spell of tradition, of unbroken continuance, was over; and with it the power which the Church had wielded over the souls of men was in great part done away.

It was not that the new Protestantism was as yet formidable, for violent and daring as they were, the adherents of Luther were few in number, and drawn mostly from the poorer classes among whom Wyclifite heresy had lingered or from the class of scholars whose theological studies drew their sympathy to the movement over sea. It was that the lump was now ready to be leavened by this petty leaven, that men's hold on the firm ground of custom was broken and their minds set drifting and questioning, that little as was the actual religious change, the thought of religious change had become familiar to the people as a whole. And with religious change was certain to come religious revolt. The human conscience was hardly likely to move everywhere in strict time to the slow advance of Henry's reforms. Men who had been roused from implicit obedience to the Papacy as a revelation of the Divine will by hearing the Pope denounced in royal proclamations as a usurper and an impostor were hardly inclined to take up submissively the new official doctrine which substituted implicit belief in the King for implicit belief in the "Bishop of Rome." But bound as Church and King now were together, it was impossible to deny a tenet of the one without entering on a course of opposition to the other. Cromwell had raised against the Monarchy the most fatal of all enemies, the force of the individual conscience, the enthusiasm of religious belief, the fire of religious fanaticism. Slowly as the area of the new Protestantism extended, every man that it gained was a possible opponent of the Crown. And should the time come, as the time was soon to come, when the Crown moved to the side of Protestantism, then in turn every soul that the older faith retained was pledged to a lifelong combat with the Monarchy.

How irresistible was the national drift was seen on

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. — 1540-1553. — *The Imperial Alliance.*

Cromwell's fall. Its first result indeed promised to be a reversal of all that Cromwell had done. Norfolk returned to power, and his influence over Henry seemed secured by the King's repudiation of Anne of Cleves and his marriage in the summer of 1540 to a niece of the Duke, Catharine Howard. But Norfolk's temper had now become wholly hostile to the movement about him. "I never read the Scripture nor never will!" the Duke replied hotly to a Protestant arguer. "It was merry in England afore the new learning came up; yea, I would all things were as hath been in times past." In his preference of an Imperial alliance to an alliance with Francis and the Lutherans Henry went warmly with his minister. Parted as he had been from Charles by the question of the divorce, the King's sympathies had remained true to the Emperor, and at this moment he was embittered against France by the difficulties it threw in the way of his projects for gaining a hold upon Scotland. Above all the King still clung to the hope of a purification of the Church by a Council, as well as of a reconciliation of England with the general body of this purified Christendom, and it was only by the Emperor that such a Council could be convened or such a reconciliation brought about. An alliance with him was far from indicating any retreat from Henry's position of independence or any submission to the Papacy. To the men of his own day Charles seemed no Catholic bigot. On the contrary the stricter representatives of Catholicism such as Paul the Fourth denounced him as a patron of heretics, and attributed the upgrowth of Lutheranism to his steady protection and encouragement. Nor was the charge without seeming justification. The old jealousy between Pope and Emperor, the more recent hostility between them as rival Italian powers, had from the beginning proved Luther's security. At the first appearance of the reformer Maximilian had recommended the Elector of Saxony to suffer no harm to be done to him; "there might come a time," said the old Emperor, "when he would be needed."

Charles had looked on the matter mainly in the same political way. In his earliest years he bought Leo's aid in his recovery of Milan from the French king by issuing the ban of the Empire against Luther in the Diet of Worms; but every Italian held that in suffering the reformer to withdraw unharmed Charles had shown not so much regard to his own safe-conduct as a purpose still "to keep the Pope in check with that rein." And as Charles dealt with Luther so he dealt with Lutheranism. The new faith profited by the Emperor's struggle with Clement the Seventh for the lordship over Italy. It was in the midst of this struggle that his brother and representative, Ferdinand, signed in the Diet of Spires an Imperial decree by which the German States were left free to arrange their religious affairs "as each should best answer to God and the Emperor." The decree gave a legal existence to the Protestant body in the Empire which it never afterwards lost.

Charles and the Council.

Such a step might well encourage the belief that Charles was himself inclining to Lutheranism; and the belief gathered strength as he sent Lutheran armies over the Alps to sack Rome and to hold the Pope a prisoner. The belief was a false one, for Charles remained utterly untouched by the religious movement about him; but even when his strife with the Papacy was to a great extent lulled by Clement's submission, he still turned a deaf ear to the Papal appeals for dealing with Lutheranism by fire and sword. His political interests and the conception which he held of his duty as Emperor alike swayed him to milder counsels. He purposed indeed to restore religious unity. His political aim was to bring Germany to his feet as he had brought Italy; and he saw that the religious schism was the great obstacle in the way of his realizing this design. As the temporal head of the Catholic world he was still more strongly bent to heal the breaches of Catholicism. But he had no wish to insist on an unconditional submission to the Papacy. He believed that there were evils

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

to be cured on the one side as on the other; and Charles s the high position which awaited him if as Emperor he coı bring about a reformation of the Church and a reuni of Christendom. Violent as Luther's words had been, t Lutheran princes and the bulk of Lutheran theologians h not yet come to look on Catholicism as an irreconcileal foe. Even on the papal side there was a learned and acti party, a party headed by Contarini and Pole, whose the logical sympathies went in many points with the Lutherar and who looked to the winning back of the Luthera as the needful prelude to any reform in the doctrii and practice of the Church; while Melancthon was hopeful as Contarini that such a reform might be wrougl and the Church again become universal. In his propos of a Council to carry on the double work of purificatic and reunion therefore Charles stood out as the represent tive of the larger part both of the Catholic and tl Protestant world. Against such a proposal however Ron struggled hard. All her tradition was against Council where the assembled bishops had in earlier days assert their superiority to the Pope, and where the Emperor wl convened the assembly and carried out its decrees rose in dangerous rivalry with the Papacy. Crushed as he wa Clement the Seventh throughout his lifetime held tl proposal of a Council stubbornly at bay. But under h successor, Paul the Third, the influence of Contarini an the moderate Catholics secured a more favourable receptic of plans of reconciliation. In April, 1541, conferenc for this purpose were in fact opened at Augsburg in whic Contarini, as Papal legate, accepted a definition of tl moot question of justification by faith which satisfie Bucer and Melancthon. On the other side, the Landgra of Hesse and the Elector of Brandenburg publicly declar that they believed it possible to come to terms on the y more vexed questions of the Mass and the Papal supremac

Charles and Henry.

Never had the reunion of the world seemed so nea and the hopes that were stirring found an echo in Englan

as well as in Germany. We can hardly doubt indeed that it was the revival of these hopes which had brought about the fall of Cromwell and the recall of Norfolk to power. Norfolk, like his master, looked to a purification of the Church by a Council as the prelude to a reconciliation of England with the general body of Catholicism; and both saw that it was by the influence of the Emperor alone that such a Council could be brought about. Charles on the other hand was ready to welcome Henry's advances. The quarrel over Catharine had ended with her death; and the wrong done her had been in part atoned for by the fall of Anne Boleyn. The aid of Henry too was needed to hold in check the opposition of France. The chief means which France still possessed of holding the Emperor at bay lay in the disunion of the Empire, and it was resolute to preserve this weapon against him at whatever cost to Christendom. While Francis remonstrated at Rome against the concessions made to the Lutherans by the Legates, he urged the Lutheran princes to make no terms with the Papacy. To the Protestants he held out hopes of his own conversion, while he promised Pope Paul that he would defend him with his life against Emperor and heretics. His intrigues were aided by the suspicions of both the religious parties. Luther refused to believe in the sincerity of the concessions made by the Legates; Paul the Third held aloof from them in sullen silence. Meanwhile Francis was preparing to raise more material obstacles to the Emperor's designs. Charles had bought his last reconciliation with the King by a promise of restoring the Milanese, but he had no serious purpose of ever fulfilling his pledge, and his retention of the Duchy gave the French King a fair pretext for threatening a renewal of the war.

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

James the Fifth.

England, as Francis hoped, he could hold in check through his alliance with the Scots. After the final expulsion of Albany in 1524 Scottish history became little more than a strife between Margaret Tudor and her husband,

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. 1540–1553.

the Earl of Angus, for power; but the growth of James the Fifth to manhood at last secured rest for the land. James had all the varied ability of his race, and he carried out with vigour its traditional policy. The Highland chieftains, the great lords of the Lowlands, were brought more under the royal sway; the Church was strengthened to serve as a check on the feudal baronage; the alliance with France was strictly preserved, as the one security against English aggression. Nephew as he was indeed of the English King, James from the outset of his reign took up an attitude hostile to England. He was jealous of the influence which the two Henries had established in his realm by the marriage of Margaret and by the building up of an English party under the Douglases; the great Churchmen who formed his most trusted advisers dreaded the influence of the religious changes across the border; while the people clung to their old hatred of England and their old dependence on France. It was only by two inroads of the border lords that Henry checked the hostile intrigues of James in 1532, his efforts to influence his nephew by an interview and alliance were met by the King's marriage with two French wives in succession, Magdalen of Valois, a daughter of Francis, and Mary, a daughter of the Duke of Guise. In 1539 when the projected coalition between France and the Empire threatened England, it had been needful to send Norfolk with an army to the Scotch frontier, and now that France was again hostile Norfolk had to move anew to the border in the autumn of 1541.

Defeat at the Solway.

While the Duke was fruitlessly endeavouring to bring James to fresh friendship a sudden blow at home weakened his power. At the close of the year Catharine Howard was arrested on a charge of adultery; a Parliament which assembled in January 1542 passed a Bill of Attainder; and in February the Queen was sent to the block. She was replaced by the widow of Lord Latimer, Catharine Parr; and the influence of Norfolk in the King's

counsels gradually gave way to that of Bishop Gardiner of Winchester. But Henry clung to the policy which the Duke favoured. At the end of 1541 two great calamities, the loss of Hungary after a victory of the Turks and a crushing defeat at Algiers, so weakened Charles that in the summer of the following year Francis ventured to attack him. The attack served only to draw closer the negotiations between England and the Emperor; and Francis was forced, as he had threatened, to give Henry work to occupy him at home. The busiest counsellor of the Scotch King, Cardinal Beaton, crossed the seas to negotiate a joint attack, and the attitude of Scotland became so menacing that in the autumn of 1542 Norfolk was again sent to the border with twenty thousand men. But terrible as were his ravages, he could not bring the Scotch army to an engagement, and want of supplies soon forced him to fall back over the border. It was in vain that James urged his nobles to follow him in a counter invasion. They were ready to defend their country; but the memory of Flodden was still fresh, and success in England would only give dangerous strength to a King in whom they saw an enemy. But James was as stubborn in his purpose as the lords. Anxious only to free himself from their presence, he waited till the two armies had alike withdrawn, and then suddenly summoned his subjects to meet him in arms on the western border. A disorderly host gathered at Lochmaben and passed into Cumberland; but the English borderers followed on them fast, and were preparing to attack when at nightfall on the twenty-fifth of November a panic seized the whole Scotch force. Lost in the darkness and cut off from retreat by the Solway Firth, thousands of men with all the baggage and guns fell into the hands of the pursuers. The news of this rout fell on the young King like a sentence of death. For a while he wandered desperately from palace to palace till at the opening of December the tidings met him at Falkirk that his queen Mary of Guise, had given birth to a child.

CHAP. I.
The Protestant Revolution.
1540-1558.

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

His two boys had both died in youth, and he was longing passionately for an heir to the crown which was slipping from his grasp. But the child was a daughter, the Mary Stuart of later history. "The deil go with it," muttered the dying king, as his mind fell back to the close of the line of Bruce and the marriage with Robert's daughter which brought the Stuarts to the Scottish throne, "The deil go with it! It will end as it began. It came with a lass and it will end with a lass." A few days later he died.

The Marriage Treaty.

The death of James did more than remove a formidable foe. It opened up for the first time a prospect of that union of the two kingdoms which was at last to close their long hostility. Scotland, torn by factions and with a babe for queen, seemed to lie at Henry's feet: and the King seized the opportunity of completing his father's work by a union of the realms. At the opening of 1543 he proposed to the Scotch regent, the Earl of Arran, the marriage of the infant Mary Stuart with his son Edward. To ensure this bridal he demanded that Mary should at once be sent to England, the four great fortresses of Scotland be placed in English hands, and a voice given to Henry himself in the administration of the Scotch Council of Regency. Arran and the Queen-mother, rivals as they were, vied with each other in apparent goodwill to the marriage; but there was a steady refusal to break the league with France, and the "English lords," as the Douglas faction were called, owned themselves helpless in face of the national jealousy of English ambition. The temper of the nation itself was seen in the answer made by the Scotch Parliament which gathered in the spring. If they consented to the young Queen's betrothal, they not only rejected the demands which accompanied the proposal, but insisted that in case of such a union Scotland should have a perpetual regent of its own, and that this office should be hereditary in the House of Arran. Warned by his very partizans that the delivery of

Mary was impossible, that if such a demand were pressed "there was not so little a boy but he would hurl stones against it, the wives would handle their distaffs, and the commons would universally die in it," Henry's proposals dropped in July to a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, he suffered France to be included among the allies of Scotland named in it, he consented that the young Queen should remain with her mother till the age of ten, and offered guarantees for the maintenance of Scotch independence.

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1558.

Scotland and France.

But modify it as he might, Henry knew that such a project of union could only be carried out by a war with Francis. His negotiations for a treaty with Charles had long been delayed through Henry's wish to drag the Emperor into an open breach with the Papacy, but at the moment of the King's first proposals for the marriage of Mary Stuart with his son the need of finding a check upon France forced on a formal alliance with the Emperor in February 1543. The two allies agreed that the war should be continued till the Duchy of Burgundy had been restored to the Emperor and till England had recovered Normandy and Guienne; while the joint fleets of Henry and Charles held the Channel and sheltered England from any danger of French attack. The main end of this treaty was doubtless to give Francis work at home which might prevent the despatch of a French force into Scotland and the overthrow of Henry's hopes of a Scotch marriage. These hopes were strengthened as the summer went on by the acceptance of his later proposals in a Parliament which was packed by the Regent, and by the actual conclusion of a marriage treaty. But if Francis could spare neither horse nor man for action in Scotland his influence in the northern kingdom was strong enough to foil Henry's plans. The Churchmen were as bitterly opposed to such a marriage as the partizans of France; and their head, Cardinal Beaton, who had held aloof from the Regent's Parliament, suddenly seized the Queen-

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. — 1540-1558. — *War with France.*

mother and her babe, crowned the infant Mary, called a Parliament in December which annulled the marriage-treaty, and set Henry at defiance.

The King's wrath at this overthrow of his hopes showed itself in a brutal and impolitic act of vengeance. He was a skilful shipbuilder; and among the many enterprizes which the restless genius of Cromwell undertook there was probably none in which Henry took so keen an interest as in his creation of an English fleet. Hitherto merchant ships had been impressed when a fleet was needed; but the progress of naval warfare had made the maintenance of an armed force at sea a condition of maritime power, and the resources furnished by the dissolution of the abbeys had been devoted in part to the building of ships of war, the largest of which, the *Mary Rose,* carried a crew of seven hundred men. The new strength which England was to wield in its navy was first seen in 1544. An army was gathered under Lord Hertford; and while Scotland was looking for the usual advance over the border the Earl's forces were quietly put on board and the English fleet appeared on the third of May in the Firth of Forth. The surprize made resistance impossible. Leith was seized and sacked, Edinburgh, then a town of wooden houses, was given to the flames, and burned for three days and three nights. The country for seven miles round was harried into a desert. The blow was a hard one, but it was little likely to bring Scotchmen round to Henry's projects of union. A brutal raid of the English borderers on Melrose and the destruction of his ancestors' tombs estranged the Earl of Angus, and was quickly avenged by his overthrow of the marauders at Ancrum Moor. Henry had yet to learn the uselessness of mere force to compass his ends. "I shall be glad to serve the King of England, with my honour," said the Lord of Buccleugh to an English envoy, "but I will not be constrained thereto if all Teviotdale be burned to the bottom of hell."

Hertford's force returned in good time to join the army

which Henry in person was gathering at Calais to co-operate with the forces assembled by Charles on the north-eastern frontier of France. Each sovereign found himself at the head of forty thousand men, and the Emperor's military ability was seen in his proposal for an advance of both armies upon Paris. But though Henry found no French force in his front, his cautious temper shrank from the risk of leaving fortresses in his rear; and while their allies pushed boldly past Chalons on the capital, the English troops were detained till September in the capture of Boulogne, and only left Boulogne to form the siege of Montreuil. The French were thus enabled to throw their whole force on the Emperor, and Charles found himself in a position from which negotiation alone could extricate him.

Growth of Lutheranism.

His ends were in fact gained by the humiliation of France, and he had as little desire to give England a strong foothold in the neighbourhood of his own Netherlands as in Wolsey's days. The widening of English territory there could hardly fail to encourage that upgrowth of heresy which the Emperor justly looked upon as the greatest danger to the hold of Spain upon the Low Countries, while it would bring Henry a step nearer to the chain of Protestant states which began on the Lower Rhine. The plans which Charles had formed for uniting the Catholics and Lutherans in the conferences of Augsburg had broken down before the opposition both of Luther and the Pope. On both sides indeed the religious contest was gathering new violence. A revival had begun in the Church itself, but it was the revival of a militant and uncompromising orthodoxy. In 1542 the fanaticism of Cardinal Caraffa forced on the establishment of a supreme Tribunal of the Inquisition at Rome. The next year saw the establishment of the Jesuits. Meanwhile Lutheranism took a new energy. The whole north of Germany became Protestant. In 1539 the younger branches of the house of Saxony joined the elder in a common adherence

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. — 1540-1553. —

to Lutheranism; and their conversion had been followed by that of the Elector of Brandenburg. Southern Germany seemed bent on following the example of the north. The hereditary possessions of Charles himself fell away from Catholicism. The Austrian duchies were overrun with heresy. Bohemia promised soon to become Hussite again. Persecution failed to check the triumph of the new opinions in the Low Countries. The Empire itself threatened to become Protestant. In 1540 the accession of the Elector Palatine robbed Catholicism of Central Germany and the Upper Rhine; and three years later, at the opening of the war with France, that of the Archbishop of Koln gave the Protestants not only the Central Rhineland but a majority in the College of Electors. It seemed impossible for Charles to prevent the Empire from repudiating Catholicism in his lifetime, or to hinder the Imperial Crown from falling to a Protestant at his death.

England and France.

The great fabric of power which had been built up by the policy of Ferdinand of Aragon was thus threatened with utter ruin, and Charles saw himself forced into the struggle he had so long avoided, if not for the interests of religion, at any rate for the interests of the House of Austria. He still hoped for a reunion from the Council which was assembling at Trent, and from which a purified Catholicism was to come. But he no longer hoped that the Lutherans would yield to the mere voice of the Council. They would yield only to force, and the first step in such a process of compulsion must be the breaking up of their League of Schmalkald. Only France could save them; and it was to isolate them from France that Charles availed himself of the terror his march on Paris had caused, and concluded a treaty with that power in September 1544. The progress of Protestantism had startled even France itself; and her old policy seemed to be abandoned in her promises of co-operation in the task of repressing heresy in the Empire. But a stronger

security against French intervention lay in the unscrupulous dexterity with which, while withdrawing from the struggle, Charles left Henry and Francis still at strife. Henry would not cede Boulogne, and Francis saw no means of forcing him to a peace save by a threat of invasion. While an army closed round Boulogne, and a squadron carried troops to Scotland, a hundred and fifty French ships were gathered in the Channel and crossed in the summer of 1545 to the Isle of Wight. But their attacks were feebly conducted and the fleet at last returned to its harbours without striking any serious blow, while the siege of Boulogne dragged idly on through the year. Both kings however drew to peace. In spite of the treaty of Crepy it was impossible for France to abandon the Lutherans, and Francis was eager to free his hands for action across the Rhine. Henry on the other hand, deserted by his ally and with a treasury ruined by the cost of the war, was ready at last to surrender his gains in it. In June 1546 a peace was concluded by which England engaged to surrender Boulogne on payment of a heavy ransom, and France to restore the annual subsidy which had been promised in 1525.

The Peace.

What aided in the close of the war was a new aspect of affairs in Scotland. Since the death of James the Fifth the great foe of England in the north had been the Archbishop of St. Andrews, Cardinal Beaton. In despair of shaking his power his rivals had proposed schemes for his assassination to Henry, and these schemes had been expressly approved. But plot after plot broke down; and it was not till May 1546 that a group of Scotch nobles who favoured the Reformation surprized his castle at St. Andrews. Shrieking miserably, "I am a priest! I am a priest! Fie! Fie! All is gone!" the Cardinal was brutally murdered, and his body hung over the castle-walls. His death made it easy to include Scotland in the peace with France which was concluded in the summer. But in England itself peace was a necessity.

The Crown was penniless. In spite of the confiscation of the abbey lands in 1539 the treasury was found empty at the very opening of the war: the large subsidies granted by the parliament were expended; and conscious that a fresh grant could hardly be expected even from the servile Houses the government in 1545 fell back on its old resource of benevolences. Of two London merchants who resisted this demand as illegal one was sent to the Fleet, the second ordered to join the army on the Scotch border; but it was significant that resistance had been offered, and the failure of the war-taxes which were voted at the close of the year to supply the royal needs drove the Council to fresh acts of confiscation. A vast mass of Church property still remained for the spoiler, and by a bill of 1545 more than two thousand chauntries and chapels, with a hundred and ten hospitals, were suppressed to the profit of the Crown. Enormous as this booty was, it could only be slowly realized; and the immediate pressure forced the Council to take refuge in the last and worst measure any government can adopt, a debasement of the currency. The evils of such a course were felt till the reign of Elizabeth. But it was a course that could not be repeated; and financial exhaustion played its part in bringing the war to an end.

Charles and the League of Schmalkald.

A still greater part was played by the aspect of affairs in the Empire. Once freed from the check of the war Charles had moved fast to his aim. In 1545 he had adjusted all minor differences with Paul the Third, and Pope and Emperor had resolved on the immediate convocation of the Council, and on the enforcement of its decisions by weight of arms. Should the Emperor be driven to war with the Lutheran princes, the Pope engaged to support him with all his power. "Were it needful" Paul promised "he would sell his very crown in his service." In December the Council was actually opened at Trent, and its proceedings soon showed that no concessions to the Lutherans could be looked for. The

Emperor's demand that the reform of the Church should first be taken in hand was evaded; and on the two great questions of the authority of the Bible as a ground of faith, and of justification, the sentence of the Council directly condemned the Protestant opinions. The Lutherans showed their resolve to make no submission by refusing to send representatives to Trent; and Charles carried out his pledges to the papacy by taking the field in the spring of 1546 to break up the League of Schmalkald. But the army gathered under the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse so far outnumbered the Imperial forces that the Emperor could not venture on a battle. Henry watched the course of Charles with a growing anxiety. The hopes of a purified and united Christendom which had drawn him a few years back to the Emperor's side faded before the stern realities of the Council. The highest pretensions of the Papacy had been sanctioned by the bishops gathered at Trent; and to the pretensions of the Papacy Henry was resolved not to bow. He was driven, whether he would or no, on the policy of Cromwell; and in the last months of his life he offered aid to the League of Schmalkald. His offers were rejected; for the Lutheran princes had no faith in his sincerity, and believed themselves strong enough to deal with the Emperor without foreign help.

Effect on English religion.

But his attitude without told on his policy at home. To the hotter Catholics as to the hotter Protestants the years since Cromwell's fall had seemed years of a gradual return to Catholicism. There had been a slight sharpening of persecution for the Protestants, and restrictions had been put on the reading of the English Bible. The alliance with Charles and the hope of reconciling England anew with a pacified Christendom gave fresh cause for suppressing heresy. Neither Norfolk nor his master indeed desired any rigorous measure of reaction, for Henry remained proud of the work he had done. His bitterness against the Papacy only grew as the years went by; and at the very moment that heretics were suffering

for a denial of the mass, others were suffering by their side for a denial of the supremacy. But strange and anomalous as its system seemed, the drift of Henry's religious government had as yet been in one direction, that of a return to and reconciliation with the body of the Catholic Church. With the decision of the Council and the new attitude of the Emperor this drift was suddenly arrested. It was not that Henry realized the revolution that was opening before him or the vast importance of the steps which his policy now led him to take. His tendency, like that of his people, was religious rather than theological, practical rather than speculative. Of the immense problems which were opening in the world neither he nor England saw anything. The religious strife which was to break Europe asunder was to the King as to the bulk of Englishmen a quarrel of words and hot temper; the truth which Christendom was to rend itself to pieces in striving to discover was a thing that could easily be found with the aid of God. There is something humorous as there is something pathetic in the warnings which Henry addressed to the Parliament at the close of 1545. The shadow of death as it fell over him gave the King's words a new gentleness and tenderness. "The special foundation of our religion being charity between man and man, it is so refrigerate as there never was more dissension and lack of love between man and man, the occasions whereof are opinions only and names devised for the continuance of the same. Some are called Papists, some Lutherans and some Anabaptists; names devised of the devil, and yet not fully without ground, for the severing of one man's heart by conceit of opinion from the other." But the remedy was a simple one. Every man was "to travail first for his own amendment." Then the bishops and clergy were to agree in their teaching, "which, seeing there is but one truth and verity, they may easily do, calling therein for the grace of God." Then the nobles and laity were to be pious and humble, to read their new

Bibles "reverently and humbly . . . and in any doubt to resort to the learned or at best the higher powers." "I am very sorry to know and hear how unreverendly that precious jewel, the Word of God, is disputed, rimed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse and tavern. This kind of man is depraved and that kind of man, this ceremony and that ceremony." All this controversy might be done away by simple charity. "Therefore be in charity one with another like brother and brother. Have respect to the pleasing of God; and then I doubt not that love I spoke of shall never be dissolved between us."

The Religious Truce.

There is something wonderful in the English coolness and narrowness, in the speculative blindness and practical good sense which could look out over such a world at such a moment, and could see nothing in it save a quarrel of "opinions, and of names devised for the continuance of the same." But Henry only expressed the general feeling of his people. England indeed was being slowly leavened with a new spirit. The humiliation of the clergy, the Lutheran tendencies of half the bishops, the crash of the abbeys, the destruction of chauntries and mass-chapels, a measure which told closely on the actual worship of the day, the new articles of faith, the diffusion of bibles, the "jangling" and discussion which followed on every step in the King's course, were all telling on the thoughts of men. But the temper of the nation as a whole remained religiously conservative. It drifted rather to the moderate reforms of the New Learning than to any radical reconstruction of the Church. There was a general disinclination indeed to push matters to either extreme, a general shrinking from the persecution which the Catholic called for as from the destruction which the Protestant was desiring. It was significant that a new heresy bill which passed through the Lords in 1545 quietly disappeared when it reached the Commons. But this shrinking rested rather on national than on theo-

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1556.

logical grounds, on a craving for national union which Henry expressed in his cry for "brotherly love," and on an imperfect appreciation of the real nature or consequence of the points at issue which made men shrink from burning their neighbours for "opinions and names devised for the continuance of the same." What Henry and what the bulk of Englishmen wanted was, not indeed wholly to rest in what had been done, but to do little more save the remedying of obvious abuses or the carrying on of obvious improvements. One such improvement was the supplying men with the means of private devotion in their own tongue, a measure from which none but the fanatics of either side dissented. This process went slowly on in the issuing of two primers in 1535 and 1539, the rendering into English of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, the publication of an English Litany for outdoor processions in 1544, and the adding to this of a collection of English prayers in 1545.

The Court Factions.

But the very tone of Henry shows his consciousness that this religious truce rested on his will alone. Around him as he lay dying stood men who were girding themselves to a fierce struggle for power, a struggle that could not fail to wake the elements of religious discord which he had striven to lull asleep. Adherents of the Papacy, advocates of a new submission to a foreign spiritual jurisdiction there were few or none; for the most conservative of English Churchmen or nobles had as yet no wish to restore the older Roman supremacy. But Norfolk and Gardiner were content with this assertion of national and ecclesiastical independence; in all matters of faith they were earnest to conserve, to keep things as they were, and in front of them stood a group of nobles who were bent on radical change. The marriages, the reforms, the profusion of Henry had aided him in his policy of weakening the nobles by building up a new nobility which sprang from the Court and was wholly dependent on the Crown. Such were the Russells, the

Cavendishes, the Wriothesleys, the Fitzwilliams. Such was John Dudley, a son of the Dudley who had been put to death for his financial oppression in Henry the Seventh's days, but who had been restored in blood, attached to the court, raised to the peerage as Lord Lisle, and who, whether as adviser or general, had been actively employed in high stations at the close of this reign. Such above all were the two brothers of Jane Seymour. The elder of the two, Edward Seymour, had been raised to the earldom of Hertford, and entrusted with the command of the English army in its operations against Scotland. As uncle of Henry's boy Edward, he could not fail to play a leading part in the coming reign; and the nobles of the "new blood," as their opponents called them in disdain, drew round him as their head. Without any historical hold on the country, raised by the royal caprice, and enriched by the spoil of the monasteries, these nobles were pledged to the changes from which they had sprung and to the party of change. Over the mass of the nation their influence was small; and in the strife for power with the older nobles which they were anticipating they were forced to look to the small but resolute body of men who, whether from religious enthusiasm or from greed of wealth or power, were bent on bringing the English Church nearer to conformity with the reformed Churches of the Continent. As Henry drew to his grave the two factions faced each other with gathering dread and gathering hate. Hot words betrayed their hopes. "If God should call the King to his mercy," said Norfolk's son, Lord Surrey, "who were so meet to govern the Prince as my lord my father?" "Rather than it should come to pass," retorted a partizan of Hertford's, "that the Prince should be under the governance of your father or you, I would abide the adventure to thrust a dagger in you!"

Lord Surrey.

In the history of English poetry the name of Lord Surrey takes an illustrious place. An Elizabethan writer tells us how at this time "sprang up a new company of

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

courtly makers, of whom Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder and Henry, Earl of Surrey, were the two chieftains; who having travelled to Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poesy, as novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesy from what it had been before, and for that cause may justly be said to be the first reformers of our English metre and style." The dull moralizings of the rimers who followed Chaucer, the rough but vivacious doggrel of Skelton, made way in the hands of Wyatt and Surrey for delicate imitations of the songs, sonnets, and rondels of Italy and France. With the Italian conceits came an Italian refinement whether of words or of thought; and the force and versatility of Surrey's youth showed itself in whimsical satires, in classical translations, in love-sonnets, and in paraphrases of the psalms. In his version of two books of the Æneid he was the first to introduce into England the Italian blank verse which was to play so great a part in our literature. But with the poetic taste of the Renascence Surrey inherited its wild and reckless energy. Once he was sent to the Fleet for challenging a gentleman to fight. Release enabled him to join his father in an expedition against Scotland, but he was no sooner back than the Londoners complained how at Candlemas the young lord and his comrades "went out with stone bows at midnight," and how next day "there was great clamour of the breaking of many glass windows both of houses and churches, and shooting at men that might be in the streets." In spite of his humorous excuse that the jest only purposed to bring home to men that "from justice' rod no fault is free, but that all such as work unright in most quiet are next unrest," Surrey paid for this outbreak with a fresh arrest which drove him to find solace in paraphrases of Ecclesiastes and the Psalms. Soon he was over sea with the English troops in Flanders, and in

1544 serving as marshal of the camp to conduct the retreat after the siege of Montreuil. Sent to relieve Boulogne, he remained in charge of the town till the spring of 1546, when he returned to England to rime sonnets to a fair Geraldine, the daughter of the Earl of Kildare, and to plunge into the strife of factions around the dying King.

Fall of the Howards.

All moral bounds had been loosened by the spirit of the Renascence, and, if we accept the charge of his rivals, Surrey now aimed at gaining a hold on Henry by offering him his sister as a mistress. It is as possible that the young Earl was aiming simply at the displacement of Catharine Parr, and at the renewal by his sister's elevation to the throne of that matrimonial hold upon Henry which the Howards had already succeeded in gaining through the unions with Anne Boleyn and Catharine Howard. But a temper such as Surrey's was ill-matched against the subtle and unscrupulous schemers who saw their enemy in a pride that scorned the "new men" about him and vowed that when once the King was dead "they should smart for it." The turn of foreign affairs gave a fresh strength to the party which sympathized with the Protestants and denounced that alliance with the Emperor which had been throughout the policy of the Howards. Henry's offer of aid to the Lutheran princes marked the triumph of this party in the royal councils; and the new steps which Cranmer was suffered to make towards an English Liturgy showed that the religious truce of Henry's later years was at last abandoned. Hertford, the head of the "new men," came more to the front as the waning health of the King brought Jane Seymour's boy, Edward, nearer to the throne. In the new reign Hertford, as the boy's uncle, was sure to play a great part; and he used his new influence to remove the only effective obstacle to his future greatness. Surrey's talk of his royal blood, the Duke's quartering of the royal arms to mark his Plantagenet descent, and some secret interviews with the French ambassador, were

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540–1683.

adroitly used to wake Henry's jealousy of the dangers which might beset the throne of his child. Norfolk and his son were alike committed to the Tower at the close of 1546. A month later Surrey was condemned and sent to the block, and his father was only saved by the sudden death of Henry the Eighth in January, 1547.

Hertford made Protector.

By an Act passed in the Parliament of 1544 it had been provided that the crown should pass to Henry's son Edward, and on Edward's death without issue to his sister Mary. Should Mary prove childless it was to go to Elizabeth, the child of Anne Boleyn. Beyond this point the Houses would make no provision, but power was given to the King to make further dispositions by will. At his death it was found that Henry had passed over the line of his sister Margaret of Scotland, and named as next in the succession to Elizabeth the daughters of his younger sister Mary by her marriage with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. As Edward was but nine years old Henry had appointed a carefully balanced Council of Regency; but the will fell into Hertford's keeping, and when the list of regents was at last disclosed Gardiner, who had till now been the leading minister, was declared to have been excluded from the number of executors. Whether the exclusion was Henry's act or the act of the men who used his name, the absence of the bishop with the imprisonment of Norfolk threw the balance of power on the side of the "new men" who were represented by Hertford and Lisle. Their chief opponent, the Chancellor Wriothesley, struggled in vain against their next step towards supremacy, the modification of Henry's will by the nomination of Hertford as Protector of the realm and governor of Edward's person. Alleged directions from the dying King served as pretexts for the elevation of the whole party to higher rank in the state. It was to repair "the decay of the old English nobility" that Hertford raised himself to the dukedom of Somerset and his brother to the barony of Seymour, the queen's

brother Lord Parr to the marquisate of Northampton, Lisle to the earldom of Warwick, Russell to that of Bedford, Wriothesley to that of Southampton. Ten of their partizans became barons, and as the number of peers in spite of recent creations still stood at about fifty such a group constituted a power in the Upper House. Alleged directions of the King were conveniently remembered to endow the new peers with public money, though the treasury was beggared and the debt pressing. The expulsion of Wriothesley from the Chancellorship and Council soon left the "new men" without a check; but they were hardly masters of the royal power when a bold stroke of Somerset laid all at his feet. A new patent of Protectorate, drawn out in the boy-King's name, empowered his uncle to act with or without the consent of his fellow executors, and left him supreme in the realm.

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

Somerset and the Protestants.

Boldly and adroitly as the whole revolution had been managed, it was none the less a revolution. To crush their opponents the Council had first used, and then set aside, Henry's will. Hertford in turn by the use of his nephew's name set aside both the will and the Council. A country gentleman, who had risen by the accident of his sister's queenship to high rank at the Court, had thus by sheer intrigue and self-assertion made himself ruler of the realm. But daring and self-confident as he was, Somerset was forced by his very elevation to seek support for the power he had won by this surprize in measures which marked the retreat of the Monarchy from that position of pure absolutism which it had reached at the close of Henry's reign. The Statute that had given to royal proclamations the force of law was repealed, and several of the new felonies and treasons which Cromwell had created and used with so terrible an effect were erased from the Statute Book. The popularity however which such measures won was too vague a force to serve in the strife of the moment. Against the pressure of the conservative party who had so suddenly found themselves

jockeyed out of power Somerset and the "new men" could look for no help but from the Protestants. The hope of their support united with the new Protector's personal predilections in his patronage of the innovations against which Henry had battled to the last. Cranmer had now drifted into a purely Protestant position; and his open break with the older system followed quickly on Seymour's rise to power. "This year," says a contemporary, "the Archbishop of Canterbury did eat meat openly in Lent in the Hall of Lambeth, the like of which was never seen since England was a Christian country." This notable act was followed by a rapid succession of sweeping changes. The legal prohibitions of Lollardry were rescinded; the Six Articles were repealed; a royal injunction removed all pictures and images from the churches. A formal Statute gave priests the right to marry. A resolution of convocation which was confirmed by Parliament brought about the significant change which first definitely marked the severance of the English Church in doctrine from the Roman, by ordering that the sacrament of the altar should be administered in both kinds.

The Common Prayer.

A yet more significant change followed The old tongue of the Church was now to be disused in public worship. The universal use of Latin had marked the Catholic and European character of the older religion: the use of English marked the strictly national and local character of the new system In the spring of 1548 a new Communion Service in English took the place of the Mass; an English book of Common Prayer, the Liturgy which with slight alterations is still used in the Church of England, soon replaced the Missal and Breviary from which its contents are mainly drawn. The name "Common Prayer," which was given to the new Liturgy, marked its real import. The theory of worship which prevailed through Mediæval Christendom, the belief that the worshipper assisted only at rites wrought for him by priestly hands, at a sacrifice wrought through priestly intervention,

at the offering of prayer and praise by priestly lips, was now set at naught. "The laity," it has been picturesquely said, "were called up into the Chancel." The act of devotion became a "common prayer" of the whole body of worshippers. The Mass became a "communion" of the whole Christian fellowship. The priest was no longer the offerer of a mysterious sacrifice, the mediator between God and the worshipper; he was set on a level with the rest of the Church, and brought down to be the simple mouthpiece of the congregation.

The Triumph of the Emperor.

What gave a wider importance to these measures was their bearing on the general politics of Christendom. The adhesion of England to the Protestant cause came at a moment when Protestantism seemed on the verge of ruin. The confidence of the Lutheran princes in their ability to resist the Emperor had been seen in their refusal of succour from Henry the Eighth. But in the winter of Henry's death the secession of Duke Maurice of Saxony with many of his colleagues from the League of Schmalkald so weakened the Protestant body that Charles was able to put its leaders to the ban of the Empire. Hertford was hardly Protector when the German princes called loudly for aid; but the fifty thousand crowns which were secretly sent by the English Council could scarcely have reached them when in April 1547 Charles surprized their camp at Muhlberg and routed their whole army. The Elector of Saxony was taken prisoner; the Landgrave of Hesse surrendered in despair. His victory left Charles master of the Empire. The jealousy of the Pope indeed at once revived with the Emperor's success, and his recall of the bishops from Trent forced Charles to defer his wider plans for enforcing religious unity; while in Germany itself he was forced to reckon with Duke Maurice and the Protestant princes who had deserted the League of Schmalkald, but whose one object in joining the Emperor had been to provide a check on his after movements. For the moment therefore he was driven to prolong the religious

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

truce by an arrangement called the "Interim." But the Emperor's purpose was now clear. Wherever his power was actually felt the religious reaction began; and the Imperial towns which held firmly to the Lutheran creed were reduced by force of arms. It was of the highest moment that in this hour of despair the Protestants saw their rule suddenly established in a new quarter, and the Lutheranism which was being trampled under foot in its own home triumphant in England. England became the common refuge of the panic-struck Protestants. Bucer and Fagius were sent to lecture at Cambridge, Peter Martyr advocated the anti-sacramentarian views of Calvin at Oxford. Cranmer welcomed refugees from every country, Germans, Italians, French, Poles, and Swiss, to his palace at Lambeth. When persecution broke out in the Low Countries the fugitive Walloons were received at London and Canterbury, and allowed to set up in both places their own churches.

Pinkie Cleugh.

But Somerset dreamed of a wider triumph for "the religion." On his death-bed Henry was said to have enforced on the Council the need of carrying out his policy of a union of Scotland with England through the marriage of its Queen with his boy. A wise statesmanship would have suffered the Protestant movement which had been growing stronger in the northern kingdom since Beaton's death to run quietly its course; and his colleagues warned Somerset to leave Scotch affairs untouched till Edward was old enough to undertake them in person. But these counsels were set aside; and a renewal of the border warfare enforced the Protector's demands for a closer union of the kingdoms. The jealousy of France was roused at once, and a French fleet appeared off the Scottish coast to reduce the castle of St. Andrews, which had been held since Beaton's death by the English partizans who murdered him. The challenge called Somerset himself to the field; and crossing the Tweed with a fine army of eighteen thousand men in the

summer of 1547 the Protector pushed along the coast till he found the Scots encamped behind the Esk on the slopes of Musselburgh, six miles eastward of Edinburgh. The English invasion had drawn all the factions of the kingdom together against the stranger, and a body of "Gospellers" under Lord Angus formed the advance-guard of the Scotch army as it moved by its right on the tenth of September to turn the English position and drive Somerset into the sea The English horse charged the Scottish front only to be flung off by its pikemen; but their triumph threw the Lowlanders into disorder, and as they pushed forward in pursuit their advance was roughly checked by the fire of a body of Italian musketeers whom Somerset had brought with him. The check was turned into a defeat by a general charge of the English line, a fatal panic broke the Scottish host, and ten thousand men fell in its headlong flight beneath the English lances.

Somerset's Policy.

Victor as he was at Pinkie Cleugh, Somerset was soon forced by famine to fall back from the wasted country. His victory indeed had been more fatal to the interests of England than a defeat. The Scots in despair turned as of old to France, and bought its protection by consenting to the child-queen's marriage with the son of Henry the Second, who had followed Francis on the throne. In the summer of 1548 Mary Stuart sailed under the escort of a French fleet and landed safely at Brest. Not only was the Tudor policy of union foiled, as it seemed, for ever, but Scotland was henceforth to be a part of the French realm. To north as to south England would feel the pressure of the French King. Nor was Somerset's policy more successful at home. The religious changes he was forcing on the land were carried through with the despotism, if not with the vigour, of Cromwell. In his acceptance of the personal supremacy of the sovereign, Gardiner was ready to bow to every change which Henry had ordered, or which his son, when of age to be fully King, might order in the days to come.

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1558.

But he denounced all ecclesiastical changes made during the King's minority as illegal and invalid. Untenable as it was, this protest probably represented the general mind of Englishmen; but the bishop was committed by Council to prison in the Fleet, and though soon released was sent by the Protector to the Tower. The power of preaching was restricted by the issue of licences only to the friends of the Primate. While all counter arguments were rigidly suppressed, a crowd of Protestant pamphleteers flooded the country with vehement invectives against the Mass and its superstitious accompaniments. The suppression of chauntries and religious gilds which was now being carried out enabled Somerset to buy the assent of noble and landowner to his measures by glutting their greed with the last spoils of the Church.

The Revolts.

But it was impossible to buy off the general aversion of the people to the Protector's measures, and German and Italian mercenaries had to be introduced to stamp out the popular discontent which broke out in the east, in the west, and in the midland counties. Everywhere men protested against the new changes and called for the maintenance of the system of Henry the Eighth. The Cornishmen refused to receive the new service "because it is like a Christmas game." In 1549 Devonshire demanded by open revolt the restoration of the Mass and the Six Articles as well as a partial re-establishment of the suppressed abbeys. The agrarian discontent woke again in the general disorder. Enclosures and evictions were going steadily on, and the bitterness of the change was being heightened by the results of the dissolution of the abbeys. Church lands had always been underlet, the monks were easy landlords, and on no estates had the peasantry been as yet so much exempt from the general revolution in culture. But the new lay masters to whom the abbey lands fell were quick to reap their full value by a rise of rents and by the same processes of eviction and enclosure as went on elsewhere. The distress was

deepened by the change in the value of money which was now beginning to be felt from the mass of gold and silver which the New World was yielding to the Old, and still more by a general rise of prices that followed on the debasement of the coinage which had begun with Henry and went on yet more unscrupulously under Somerset. The trouble came at last to a head in the manufacturing districts of the eastern counties. Twenty thousand men gathered round an "oak of Reformation" near Norwich, and repulsing the royal troops in a desperate engagement renewed the old cries for a removal of evil counsellors, a prohibition of enclosures, and redress for the grievances of the poor.

Somerset's Fall.

The revolt of the Norfolk men was stamped out in blood by the energy of Lord Warwick, as the revolt in the west had been put down by Lord Russell, but the risings had given a fatal blow to Somerset's power. It had already been weakened by strife within his own family. His brother Thomas had been created Lord Seymour and raised to the post of Lord High Admiral, but glutted as he was with lands and honours, his envy at Somerset's fortunes broke out in a secret marriage with the Queen-dowager, Catharine Parr, in an attempt on her death to marry Elizabeth, and in intrigues to win the confidence of the young King and detach him from his brother. Seymour's discontent was mounting into open revolt when in the January of 1549 he was arrested, refused a trial, attainted, and sent to the block. The stain of a brother's blood, however justly shed, rested from that hour on Somerset, while the nobles were estranged from him by his resolve to enforce the laws against enclosures and evictions, as well as by the weakness he had shown in the presence of the revolt. Able indeed as Somerset was, his temper was not that of a ruler of men; and his miserable administration had all but brought government to a standstill. While he was dreaming of a fresh invasion of Scotland the treasury was empty, not a servant of the state was paid, and the soldiers he had

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

engaged on the Continent refused to cross the Channel in despair of receiving their hire. It was only by loans raised at ruinous interest that the Protector escaped sheer bankruptcy when the revolts in east and west came to swell the royal expenses. His weakness in tampering with the popular demands completed his ruin. The nobles dreaded a communistic outbreak like that of the Suabian peasantry, and their dread was justified by prophecies that monarchy and nobility were alike to be destroyed and a new rule set up under governors elected by the people. They dreaded yet more the being forced to disgorge their spoil to appease the discontent At the close of 1549 therefore the Council withdrew openly from Somerset, and forced the Protector to resign

Warwick's Protectorate.

His office passed to the Earl of Warwick, to whose ruthless severity the suppression of the revolt was mainly due. The change of governors however brought about no change of system. Peace indeed was won from France by the immediate surrender of Boulogne ; but the misgovernment remained as great as ever, the currency was yet further debased, and a wild attempt made to remedy the effects of this measure by a royal fixing of prices. It was in vain that Latimer denounced the prevailing greed, and bade the Protestant lords choose "either restitution or else damnation." Their sole aim seemed to be that of building up their own fortunes at the cost of the state. All pretence of winning popular sympathy was gone, and the rule of the upstart nobles who formed the Council of Regency became simply a rule of terror. "The greater part of the people," one of their creatures, Cecil, avowed, "is not in favour of defending this cause, but of aiding its adversaries ; on that side are the greater part of the nobles, who absent themselves from Court, all the bishops save three, or four, almost all the judges and lawyers, almost all the justices of the peace, the priests who can move their flocks any way, for the whole of the commonalty is in such a state of irritation that it will easily

follow any stir towards change." But united as it was in its opposition the nation was helpless. The system of despotism which Cromwell built up had been seized by a knot of adventurers, and with German and Italian mercenaries at their disposal they rode roughshod over the land.

The Reformation.

At such a moment it seemed madness to provoke foes abroad as well as at home, but the fanaticism of the young King was resolved to force on his sister Mary a compliance with the new changes, and her resistance was soon backed by the remonstrances of her cousin, the Emperor. Charles was now at the height of his power, master of Germany, preparing to make the Empire hereditary in the person of his son, Philip, and preluding a wider effort to suppress heresy throughout the world by the establishment of the Inquisition in the Netherlands and a fiery persecution which drove thousands of Walloon heretics to find a refuge in England. But heedless of dangers from without or of dangers from within Cranmer and his colleagues advanced more boldly than ever in the career of innovation. Four prelates who adhered to the older system were deprived of their sees and committed on frivolous pretexts to the Tower. A new Catechism embodied the doctrines of the reformers, and a book of Homilies which enforced the chief Protestant tenets was ordered to be read in Churches. A crowning defiance was given to the doctrine of the Mass by an order to demolish the stone altars and replace them by wooden tables, which were stationed for the most part in the middle of the church. In 1552 a revised Prayer-book was issued, and every change made in it leaned directly towards the extreme Protestantism which was at this time finding a home at Geneva. On the cardinal point of difference, the question of the sacrament, the new formularies broke away not only from the doctrine of Rome but from that of Luther, and embodied the anti-sacramentarian tenets of Zuingli and Calvin. Forty-two Articles of Religion were introduced; and though since reduced by omissions to thirty-nine these have remained to this day

the formal standard of doctrine in the English Church. Like the Prayer-book, they were mainly the work of Cranmer; and belonging as they did to the class of Confessions which were now being framed in Germany to be presented to the Council of Christendom which Charles was still resolute to re-assemble, they marked the adhesion of England to the Protestant movement on the Continent. Even the episcopal mode of government which still connected the English Church with the old Catholic Communion was reduced to a form; in Cranmer's mind the spiritual powers of the bishops were drawn simply from the King's commission as their temporal jurisdiction was exercized in the King's name. They were reduced therefore to the position of royal officers, and called to hold their offices simply at the royal pleasure. The sufferings of the Protestants had failed to teach them the worth of religious liberty; and a new code of ecclesiastical laws, which was ordered to be drawn up by a board of Commissioners as a substitute for the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, although it shrank from the penalty of death, attached that of perpetual imprisonment or exile to the crimes of heresy, blasphemy, and adultery, and declared excommunication to involve a severance of the offender from the mercy of God and his deliverance into the tyranny of the devil. Delays in the completion of this Code prevented its legal establishment during Edward's reign; but the use of the new Liturgy and attendance at the new service was enforced by imprisonment, and subscription to the Articles of Faith was demanded by royal authority from all clergymen, churchwardens, and schoolmasters.

The Religious Disorder

The distaste for changes so hurried and so rigorously enforced was increased by the daring speculations of the more extreme Protestants. The real value of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century to mankind lay, not in its substitution of one creed for another, but in the new spirit of enquiry, the new freedom of thought and of discussion, which was awakened during the process of change.

But however familiar such a truth may be to us, it was absolutely hidden from the England of the time. Men heard with horror that the foundations of faith and morality were questioned, polygamy advocated, oaths denounced as unlawful, community of goods raised into a sacred obligation, the very Godhead of the Founder of Christianity denied. The repeal of the Statute of Heresy left indeed the powers of the Common Law intact, and Cranmer availed himself of these to send heretics of the last class without mercy to the stake. But within the Church itself the Primate's desire for uniformity was roughly resisted by the more ardent members of his own party. Hooper, who had been named Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the episcopal habits, and denounced them as the livery of the "harlot of Babylon," a name for the Papacy which was supposed to have been discovered in the Apocalypse. Ecclesiastical order came almost to an end. Priests flung aside the surplice as superstitious. Patrons of livings presented their huntsmen or gamekeepers to the benefices in their gift, and kept the stipend. All teaching of divinity ceased at the Universities: the students indeed had fallen off in numbers, the libraries were in part scattered or burned, the intellectual impulse of the New Learning died away. One noble measure indeed, the foundation of eighteen Grammar Schools, was destined to throw a lustre over the name of Edward, but it had no time to bear fruit in his reign.

Ireland and the Reformation.

While the reckless energy of the reformers brought England to the verge of chaos, it brought Ireland to the brink of rebellion. The fall of Cromwell had been followed by a long respite in the religious changes which he was forcing on the conquered dependency; but with the accession of Edward the Sixth the system of change was renewed with all the energy of Protestant zeal. In 1551 the bishops were summoned before the deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger, to receive the new English Liturgy which, though written in a tongue as strange to the native

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1558.

Irish as Latin itself, was now to supersede the Latin service-book in every diocese. The order was the signal for an open strife. "Now shall every illiterate fellow read mass," burst forth Dowdall, the Archbishop of Armagh, as he flung out of the chamber with all but one of his suffragans at his heels. Archbishop Browne of Dublin on the other hand was followed in his profession of obedience by the Bishops of Meath, Limerick, and Kildare. The government however was far from quailing before the division of the episcopate. Dowdall was driven from the country; and the vacant sees were filled with Protestants, like Bale, of the most advanced type. But no change could be wrought by measures such as these in the opinions of the people themselves The new episcopal reformers spoke no Irish, and of their English sermons not a word was understood by the rude kernes around the pulpit. The native priests remained silent. "As for preaching we have none," reports a zealous Protestant, "without which the ignorant can have no knowledge." The prelates who used the new Prayer-book were simply regarded as heretics. The Bishop of Meath was assured by one of his flock that, "if the country wist how, they would eat you." Protestantism had failed to wrest a single Irishman from his older convictions, but it succeeded in uniting all Ireland against the Crown. The old political distinctions which had been produced by the conquest of Strongbow faded before the new struggle for a common faith. The population within the Pale and without it became one, "not as the Irish nation," it has been acutely said, "but as Catholics." A new sense of national identity was found in the identity of religion. "Both English and Irish begin to oppose your Lordship's orders," Browne had written to Cromwell at the very outset of these changes, "and to lay aside their national old quarrels."

The Peace of Passau.

Oversea indeed the perils of the new government passed suddenly away. Charles had backed Mary's resistance with threats, and as he moved forward to that mastery of

the world to which he confidently looked his threats might any day become serious dangers. But the peace with England had set the French government free to act in Germany, and it found allies in the great middle party of princes whose secession from the League of Schmalkald had seemed to bring ruin to the Protestant cause. The aim of Duke Maurice in bringing them to desert the League had been to tie the Emperor's hands by the very fact of their joining him, and for a while this policy had been successful. But the death of Paul the Third, whose jealousy had till now foiled the Emperor's plans, and the accession of an Imperial nominee to the Papal throne, enabled Charles to move more boldly to his ends, and at the close of 1551 a fresh assembly of the Council at Trent, and an Imperial summons of the Lutheran powers to send divines to its sessions and to submit to its decisions, brought matters to an issue. Maurice was forced to accept the aid of the stranger and to conclude a secret treaty with France. He was engaged as a general of Charles in the siege of Magdeburg; but in the spring of 1552 the army he had then at command was suddenly marched to the south, and through the passes of the Tyrol the Duke moved straight on the Imperial camp at Innspruck. Charles was forced to flee for very life while the Council at Trent broke hastily up, and in a few months the whole Imperial design was in ruin. Henry the Second was already moving on the Rhine; to meet the French King Charles was forced to come to terms with the Lutheran princes; and his signature in the summer of a Treaty at Passau secured to their states the free exercize of the reformed religion and gave the Protestant princes their due weight in the tribunals of the empire.

The Protestant Misrule.

The humiliation of the Emperor, the fierce warfare which now engaged both his forces and those of France, removed from England the danger of outer interference. But within the misrule went recklessly on. All that men saw was a religious and political chaos, in which ecclesiastical order had perished and in which politics were dying down into the

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1553.

squabbles of a knot of nobles over the spoils of the Church and the Crown. Not content with Somerset's degradation, the Council charged him in 1551 with treason, and sent him to the block. Honours and lands were lavished as ever on themselves and their adherents. Warwick became Duke of Northumberland, Lord Dorset was made Duke of Suffolk, Paulet rose to the Marquisate of Winchester, Sir William Herbert was created Earl of Pembroke. The plunder of the chauntries and the gilds failed to glut the appetite of this crew of spoilers. Half the lands of every see were flung to them in vain; an attempt was made to satisfy their greed by a suppression of the wealthy see of Durham; and the whole endowments of the Church were threatened with confiscation. But while the courtiers gorged themselves with manors, the Treasury grew poorer. The coinage was again debased. Crown lands to the value of five millions of our modern money had been granted away to the friends of Somerset and Warwick. The royal expenditure mounted in seventeen years to more than four times its previous total. In spite of the brutality and bloodshed with which revolt had been suppressed, and of the foreign soldiery on whom the Council relied, there were signs of resistance which would have made less reckless statesmen pause. The temper of the Parliament had drifted far from the slavish subservience which it showed at the close of Henry's reign. The House of Commons met Northumberland's project for the pillage of the bishoprick of Durham with opposition, and rejected a new treason bill. In 1552 the Duke was compelled to force nominees of his own on the constituencies by writs from the Council before he could count on a house to his mind. Such writs had been often issued since the days of Henry the Seventh; but the ministers of Edward were driven to an expedient which shows how rapidly the temper of independence was growing. The summons of new members from places hitherto unrepresented was among the prerogatives of the Crown, and the Protectorate used this

power to issue writs to small villages in the west which could be trusted to return members to its mind.

Edward the Sixth.

This "packing of Parliament" was to be largely extended in the following reigns; but it passed as yet with little comment. What really kept England quiet was a trust that the young King, who would be of age in two or three years, would then set all things right again. "When he comes of age," said a Hampshire squire, "he will see another rule, and hang up a hundred heretic knaves." Edward's temper was as lordly as that of his father, and had he once really reigned he would probably have dealt as roughly with the plunderers who had used his name as England hoped. But he was a fanatical Protestant, and his rule would almost certainly have forced on a religious strife as bitter and disastrous as the strife which broke the strength of Germany and France. From this calamity the country was saved by his waning health. Edward was now fifteen, but in the opening of 1553 the signs of coming death became too clear for Northumberland and his fellows to mistake them. By the Statute of the Succession the death of the young King would bring Mary to the throne; and as Mary was known to have refused acceptance of all changes in her father's system, and was looked on as anxious only to restore it, her accession became a subject of national hope. But to Northumberland and his fellows her succession was fatal. They had personally outraged Mary by their attempts to force her into compliance with their system. Her first act would be to free Norfolk and the bishops whom they held prisoners in the Tower, and to set these bitter enemies in power. With ruin before them the Protestant lords were ready for a fresh revolution; and the bigotry of the young King fell in with their plans.

Edward's Will.

In his zeal for "the religion," and in his absolute faith in his royal autocracy, Edward was ready to override will and statute and to set Mary's rights aside. In such a case the crown fell legally to Elizabeth,

CHAP. I. The Protestant Revolution. 1540-1583.

the daughter of Anne Boleyn, who had been placed by the Act next in succession to Mary, and whose training under Catharine Parr and the Seymours gave good hopes of her Protestant sympathies. The cause of Elizabeth would have united the whole of the "new men" in its defence, and might have proved a formidable difficulty in Mary's way. But for the maintenance of his personal power Northumberland could as little count on Elizabeth as on Mary; and in Edward's death the Duke saw a chance of raising, if not himself, at any rate his own blood to the throne. He persuaded the young King that he possessed as great a right as his father to settle the succession of the Crown by will. Henry had passed by the children of his sister Margaret of Scotland, and had placed next to Elizabeth in the succession the children of his younger sister Mary, the wife of Charles Brandon, the Duke of Suffolk. Frances, Mary's child by this marriage, was still living, the mother of three daughters by her marriage with Grey, Lord Dorset, a hot partizan of the religious changes, who had been raised under the Protectorate to the Dukedom of Suffolk. Frances was a woman of thirty-seven; but her accession to the Crown squared as little with Northumberland's plans as that of Mary or Elizabeth. In the will therefore which the young King drew up Edward was brought to pass over Frances, and to name as his successor her eldest daughter, the Lady Jane Grey. The marriage of Jane Grey with Guildford Dudley, the fourth son of Northumberland, was all that was needed to complete the unscrupulous plot. It was the celebration of this marriage in May which first woke a public suspicion of the existence of such designs, and the general murmur which followed on the suspicion might have warned the Duke of his danger. But the secret was closely kept, and it was only in June that Edward's "plan" was laid in the same strict secrecy before Northumberland's colleagues. A project which raised the Duke into a virtual sovereignty over the realm could hardly fail to stir resistance in the

the Council. The King however was resolute, and his will was used to set aside all scruples. The judges who represented that letters patent could not override a positive statute were forced into signing their assent by Edward's express command. To their signatures were added those of the whole Council with Cranmer at its head. The primate indeed remonstrated, but his remonstrances proved as fruitless as those of his fellow councillors.

Fall of Northumberland.

The deed was hardly done when on the sixth of July the young King passed away. Northumberland felt little anxiety about the success of his design. He had won over Lord Hastings to his support by giving him his daughter in marriage, and had secured the help of Lord Pembroke by wedding Jane's sister, Catharine, to his son. The army, the fortresses, the foreign soldiers, were at his command; the hotter Protestants were with him; France, in dread of Mary's kinship with the Emperor, offered support to his plans. Jane therefore was at once proclaimed Queen on Edward's death, and accepted as their sovereign by the Lords of the Council. But the temper of the whole people rebelled against so lawless a usurpation. The eastern counties rose as one man to support Mary; and when Northumberland marched from London with ten thousand at his back to crush the rising, the Londoners, Protestant as they were, showed their ill-will by a stubborn silence. "The people crowd to look upon us," the Duke noted gloomily, "but not one calls 'God speed ye.'" While he halted for reinforcements his own colleagues struck him down. Eager to throw from their necks the yoke of a rival who had made himself a master, the Council no sooner saw the popular reaction than they proclaimed Mary Queen; and this step was at once followed by a declaration of the fleet in her favour, and by the announcement of the levies in every shire that they would only fight in her cause. As the tidings reached him the Duke's courage suddenly gave way. His retreat to Cambridge was the signal for a general defection. Northumberland himself threw his

CHAP. I. — The Protestant Revolution. — 1540-1553.

cap into the air and shouted with his men for Queen Mary. But his submission failed to avert his doom; and the death of the Duke drew with it the imprisonment in the Tower of the hapless girl whom he had made the tool of his ambition.

CHAPTER II.

THE CATHOLIC REACTION.

1553—1558.

Mary and the Monarchy.

THE triumph of Mary was a fatal blow at the system of despotism which Henry the Eighth had established. It was a system that rested not so much on the actual strength possessed by the Crown as on the absence of any effective forces of resistance. At Henry's death the one force of opposition which had developed itself was that of the Protestants, but whether in numbers or political weight the Protestants were as yet of small consequence, and their resistance did little to break the general drift of both nation and King. For great as were the changes which Henry had wrought in the severance of England from the Papacy and the establishment of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown, they were wrought with fair assent from the people at large; and when once the discontent roused by Cromwell's violence had been appeased by his fall England as a whole acquiesced in the conservative system of the King. This national union however was broken by the Protectorate. At the moment when it had reached its height the royal authority was seized by a knot of nobles and recklessly used to further the revolutionary projects of a small minority of the people. From the hour of this revolution a new impulse was given to resistance. The older nobility, the bulk of the gentry, the wealthier merchants, the great mass of the people, found themselves thrown by the very instinct of conservatism into opposition to

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

the Crown. It was only by foreign hirelings that revolt was suppressed; it was only by a reckless abuse of the system of packing the Houses that Parliament could be held in check. At last the Government ventured on an open defiance of law; and a statute of the realm was set aside at the imperious bidding of a boy of fifteen. Master of the royal forces, wielding at his will the royal authority, Northumberland used the voice of the dying Edward to set aside rights of succession as sacred as his own. But the attempt proved an utter failure. The very forces on which the Duke relied turned against him. The whole nation fronted him in arms. The sovereign whom the voice of the young King named as his successor passed from the throne to the Tower, and a sovereign whose title rested on parliamentary statute took her place.

The religious reaction.

At the opening of August Mary entered London in triumph Short and thin in figure, with a face drawn and colourless that told of constant ill-health, there was little in the outer seeming of the new queen to recall her father; but her hard, bright eyes, her manlike voice, her fearlessness and self-will, told of her Tudor blood, as her skill in music, her knowledge of languages, her love of learning, spoke of the culture and refinement of Henry's Court, Though Mary was thirty-seven years old, the strict retirement in which she had lived had left her as ignorant of the actual temper of England as England was ignorant of her own. She had founded her resistance to the changes of the Protectorate on a resolve to adhere to her father's system till her brother came of age to rule, and England believed her to be longing like itself simply for a restoration of what Henry had left. The belief was confirmed by her earlier actions. The changes of the Protectorate were treated as null and void. Gardiner, Henry's minister, was drawn from the Tower to take the lead as Chancellor at the Queen's Council-board. Bonner and the deposed bishops were restored to their sees. Ridley with the others who had displaced them, were again expelled.

Latimer, as a representative of the extreme Protestants, was sent to the Tower; and the foreign refugees, as anti-sacramentarians, were ordered to leave England. On an indignant protest from Cranmer against reports that he was ready to abandon the new reforms the Archbishop was sent for his seditious demeanour to the Tower, and soon put on his trial for treason with Lady Jane Grey, her husband, and two of his brothers. Each pleaded guilty; but no attempt was made to carry out the sentence of death. In all this England went with the Queen. The popular enthusiasm hardly waited in fact for the orders of the Government. The whole system which had been pursued during Edward's reign fell with a sudden crash. London indeed retained much of its Protestant sympathy, but over the rest of the country the tide of reaction swept without a check. The married priests were driven from their churches, the images were replaced. In many parishes the new Prayer-book was set aside and the mass restored. The Parliament which met in October annulled the laws made respecting religion during the past reign, and re-established the form of service as used in the last year of Henry the Eighth.

The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

Mary's aim.

Up to this point the temper of England went fairly with that of the Queen. But there were from the first signs of a radical difference between the aim of Mary and that of her people. With the restoration of her father's system the nation as a whole was satisfied. Mary on the other hand looked on such a restoration simply as a step towards a complete revival of the system which Henry had done away. Through long years of suffering and peril her fanaticism had been patiently brooding over the hope of restoring to England its older religion. She believed, as she said at a later time to the Parliament, that "she had been predestined and preserved by God to the succession of the Crown for no other end save that He might make use of her above all else in the bringing back of the realm to the Catholic faith." Her zeal however was checked by the fact that she stood almost alone in her aim, as well as

by cautious advice from her cousin, the Emperor; and she assured the Londoners that "albeit her own conscience was stayed in matters of religion, yet she meant not to compel or strain men's consciences otherwise than God should, as she trusted, put in their hearts a persuasion of the truth that she was in, through the opening of his word unto them by godly, and virtuous, and learned preachers." She had in fact not ventured as yet to refuse the title of "Head of the Church next under God" or to disclaim the powers which the Act of Supremacy gave her; on the contrary she used these powers in the regulation of preaching as her father had used them The strenuous resistance with which her proposal to set aside the new Prayer Book was met in Parliament warned her of the difficulties that awaited any projects of radical change. The proposal was carried, but only after a hot conflict which lasted over six days and which left a third of the Lower House still opposed to it. Their opposition by no means implied approval of the whole series of religious changes of which the Prayer Book formed a part, for the more moderate Catholics were pleading at this time for prayers in the vulgar tongue, and on this question followers of More and Colet might have voted with the followers of Cranmer. But it showed how far men's minds were from any spirit of blind reaction or blind compliance with the royal will.

The Spanish Marriage.

The temper of the Parliament indeed was very different from that of the Houses which had knelt before Henry the Eighth. If it consented to repeal the enactment which rendered her mother's marriage invalid and to declare Mary "born in lawful matrimony," it secured the abolition of all the new treasons and felonies created in the two last reigns. The demand for their abolition showed that jealousy of the growth of civil tyranny had now spread from the minds of philosophers like More to the minds of common Englishmen. Still keener was the jealousy of any marked revolution in the religious system which Henry had established. The wish to return to the obedience of

Rome lingered indeed among some of the clergy and in the northern shires. But elsewhere the system of a national Church was popular, and it was backed by the existence of a large and influential class who had been enriched by the abbey lands. Forty thousand families had profited by the spoil, and watched anxiously any approach of danger to their new possessions, such as submission to the Papacy was likely to bring about. On such a submission however Mary was resolved. and it was to gain strength for such a step that she determined to seek a husband from her mother's house. The policy of Ferdinand of Aragon, so long held at bay by adverse fortune, was now to find its complete fulfilment. To one line of the house of Austria, that of Charles the Fifth, had fallen not only the Imperial Crown but the great heritage of Burgundy, Aragon, Naples, Castile, and the Castilian dependencies in the New World. To a second, that of the Emperor's brother Ferdinand, had fallen the Austrian duchies, Bohemia and Hungary. The marriage of Catharine was now, as it seemed, to bear its fruits by the union of Mary with a son of Charles, and the placing a third Austrian line upon the throne of England. The gigantic scheme of bringing all western Europe together under the rule of a single family seemed at last to draw to its realization.

Its political grounds.

It was no doubt from political as well as religious motives that Mary set her heart on this union. Her rejection of Gardiner's proposal that she should marry the young Courtenay, Earl of Devon, a son of the Marquis of Exeter whom Henry had beheaded, the resolve which she expressed to wed "no subject, no Englishman," was founded in part on the danger to her throne from the pretensions of Mary Stuart, whose adherents cared little for the exclusion of the Scotch line from the succession by Henry's will and already alleged the illegitimate births of both Mary Tudor and Elizabeth through the annulling of their mothers' marriages as a ground for denying their right to the throne. Such claims became doubly formidable through the marriage

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

of Mary Stuart with the heir of the French Crown, and the virtual union of both Scotland and France in this claimant's hands. It was only to Charles that the Queen could look for aid against such a pressure as this, and Charles was forced to give her aid. His old dreams of a mastery of the world had faded away before the stern realities of the Peace of Passau and his repulse from the walls of Metz. His hold over the Empire was broken. France was more formidable than ever. To crown his difficulties the growth of heresy and of the spirit of independence in the Netherlands threatened to rob him of the finest part of the Burgundian heritage. With Mary Stuart once on the English throne, and the great island of the west knit to the French monarchy, the balance of power would be utterly overthrown, the Low Countries lost, and the Imperial Crown, as it could hardly be doubted, reft from the house of Austria. He was quick therefore to welcome the Queen's advances, and to offer his son Philip, who though not yet thirty had been twice a widower, as a candidate for her hand.

Opposition of Parliament.

The offer came weighted with a heavy bribe. The keen foresight of the Emperor already saw the difficulty of holding the Netherlands in union with the Spanish monarchy; and while Spain, Naples, and Franche Comté descended to Philip's eldest son, Charles promised the heritage of the Low Countries with England to the issue of Philip and Mary. He accepted too the demand of Gardiner and the Council that in the event of such a union England should preserve complete independence both of policy and action. In any case the marriage would save England from the grasp of France, and restore it, as the Emperor hinted, to the obedience of the Church. But the project was hardly declared when it was met by an outburst of popular indignation. Gardiner himself was against a union that would annul the national independence which had till now been the aim of Tudor policy, and that would drag England helplessly in the wake of the House

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

of Austria. The mass of conservative Englishmen shrank from the religious aspects of the marriage. For the Emperor had now ceased to be an object of hope or confidence as a mediator who would at once purify the Church from abuses, and restore the unity of Christendom; he had ranged himself definitely on the side of the Papacy and of the Council of Trent; and the cruelties of the Inquisition which he had introduced into Flanders gave a terrible indication of the bigotry which he was to bequeath to his House. The marriage with Philip meant, it could hardly be doubted, a submission to the Papacy, and an undoing not only of the religious changes of Edward but of the whole system of Henry. Loyal and conservative as was the temper of the Parliament, it was at one in its opposition to a Spanish marriage and in the request which it made through a deputation of its members to the Queen that she would marry an Englishman. The request was a new step forward on the part of the Houses to the recovery of their older rights. Already called by Cromwell's policy to more than their old power in ecclesiastical matters, their dread of revolutionary change pushed them to an intervention in matters of state. Mary noted the advance with all a Tudor's jealousy. She interrupted the speaker; she rebuked the Parliament for taking too much on itself; she declared she would take counsel on such a matter "with God and with none other." But the remonstrance had been made, the interference was to serve as a precedent in the reign to come, and a fresh proof had been given that Parliament was no longer the slavish tool of the Crown.

Wyatt's rising.

But while the nation grumbled and the Parliament remonstrated, one party in the realm was filled with absolute panic by the news of the Spanish match. The Protestants saw in the marriage not only the final overthrow of their religious hopes, but a close of the religious truce, and an opening of persecution. The general opposition to the match, with the dread of the holders of Church

CHAP. II. — The Catholic Reaction. — 1553-1558.

lands that their possessions were in danger, encouraged the more violent to plan a rising; and France, naturally jealous of an increase of power by its great opponent, promised to support them by an incursion from Scotland and an attack on Calais. The real aim of the rebellion was, no doubt, the displacement of Mary, and the setting either of Jane Grey, or, as the bulk of the Protestants desired, of Elizabeth, on the throne. But these hopes were cautiously hidden; and the conspirators declared their aim to be that of freeing the Queen from evil counsellors, and of preventing her union with the Prince of Spain. The plan combined three simultaneous outbreaks of revolt. Sir Peter Carew engaged to raise the west, the Duke of Suffolk to call the midland counties to arms, while Sir Thomas Wyatt led the Kentishmen on London. The rising was planned for the spring of 1554. But the vigilance of the Government drove it to a premature explosion in January, and baffled it in the centre and the west. Carew fled to France; Suffolk, who appeared in arms at Leicester, found small response from the people, and was soon sent prisoner to the Tower. The Kentish rising however proved a more formidable danger. A cry that the Spaniards were coming "to conquer the realm" drew thousands to Wyatt's standard. The ships in the Thames submitted to be seized by the insurgents. A party of the train-bands of London, who marched with the royal guard under the old Duke of Norfolk against them, deserted to the rebels in a mass with shouts of "A Wyatt! a Wyatt! we are all Englishmen!"

Its failure.

Had the Kentishmen moved quickly on the capital, its gates would have been flung open and success would have been assured. But at the critical moment Mary was saved by her queenly courage. Riding boldly to the Guildhall she appealed with "a man's voice" to the loyalty of the citizens, and denounced the declaration of Wyatt's followers as "a Spanish cloak to cover their purpose against our religion." She pledged herself, "on the word of a Queen, that if it

shall not probably appear to all the nobility and commons in the high court of Parliament that this marriage shall be for the high benefit and commodity of all the whole realm, then will I abstain from marriage while I live." The pledge was a momentous one, for it owned the very claim of the two Houses which the Queen had till now haughtily rejected; and with the remonstrance of the Parliament still fresh in their ears the Londoners may well have believed that the marriage-project would come quietly to an end. The dread too of any change in religion by the return of the violent Protestantism of Edward's day could hardly fail to win Mary support among the citizens. The mayor answered for their loyalty, and when Wyatt appeared on the Southwark bank the bridge was secured against him. But the rebel leader knew that the issue of the revolt hung on the question which side London would take, and that a large part of the Londoners favoured his cause. Marching therefore up the Thames he seized a bridge at Kingston, threw his force across the river, and turned rapidly back on the capital. But a night march along miry roads wearied and disorganized his men; the bulk of them were cut off from their leader by a royal force which had gathered in the fields at what is now Hyde Park Corner, and only Wyatt himself with a handful of followers pushed desperately on past the palace of St James, whence the Queen refused to fly even while the rebels were marching beneath its walls, along the Strand to Ludgate. "I have kept touch," he cried as he sank exhausted at the gate. But it was closed: his adherents within were powerless to effect their promised diversion in his favour; and as he fell back the daring leader was surrounded at Temple Bar and sent to the Tower.

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

The marriage.

The failure of the revolt was fatal to the girl whom part at least of the rebels would have placed on the throne. Lady Jane Grey, who had till now been spared and treated with great leniency, was sent to the block; and her father,

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

her husband, and her uncle, atoned for the ambition of the House of Suffolk by the death of traitors. Wyatt and his chief adherents followed them to execution, while the bodies of the poorer insurgents were dangling on gibbets round London. Elizabeth, who had with some reason been suspected of complicity in the insurrection, was sent to the Tower; and only saved from death by the interposition of the Council. The leading Protestants fled in terror over sea. But the failure of the revolt did more than crush the Protestant party; it enabled the Queen to lay aside the mask of moderation which had been forced on her by the earlier difficulties of her reign. An order for the expulsion of all married clergy from their cures, with the deprivation of nine bishops who had been appointed during the Protectorate and who represented its religious tendencies, proved the Queen's resolve to enter boldly on a course of reaction. Her victory secured the Spanish marriage. It was to prevent Philip's union to Mary that Wyatt had risen, and with his overthrow the Queen's policy stood triumphant. The whole strength of the conservative opposition was lost when opposition could be branded as disloyalty. Mary too was true to the pledge she had given that the match should only be brought about with the assent of Parliament. But pressure was unscrupulously used to secure compliant members in the new elections, and a reluctant assent to the marriage was wrung from the Houses when they assembled in the spring Philip was created king of Naples by his father to give dignity to his union; and in the following July Mary met him at Winchester and became his wife.

Philip.

As he entered London with the Queen, men noted curiously the look of the young King whose fortunes were to be so closely linked with those of England for fifty years to come. Far younger than his bride, for he was but twenty-six, there was little of youth in the small and fragile frame, the sickly face, the sedentary habits,

The Catholic Reaction.

1553-1558.

the Spanish silence and reserve, which estranged Englishmen from Philip as they had already estranged his subjects in Italy and his future subjects in the Netherlands. Here however he sought by an unusual pleasantness of demeanour as well as by profuse distributions of gifts to win the national good will, for it was only by winning it that he could accomplish the work he came to do. His first aim was to reconcile England with the Church. The new Spanish marriage was to repair the harm which the earlier Spanish marriage had brought about by securing that submission to Rome on which Mary was resolved. Even before Philip's landing in England the great obstacle to reunion had been removed by the consent of Julius the Third under pressure from the Emperor to waive the restoration of the Church-lands in the event of England's return to obedience. Other and almost as great obstacles indeed seemed to remain. The temper of the nation had gone with Henry in his rejection of the Papal jurisdiction. Mary's counsellors had been foremost among the men who advocated the change. Her minister, Bishop Gardiner, seemed pledged to oppose any submission to Rome. As secretary of state after Wolsey's fall he had taken a prominent part in the measures which brought about a severance between England and the Papacy; as Bishop of Winchester he had written a famous tract "On True Obedience" in which the Papal supremacy had been expressly repudiated; and to the end of Henry's days he had been looked upon as the leading advocate of the system of a national and independent Church. Nor had his attitude changed in Edward's reign. In the process for his deprivation he avowed himself ready as ever to maintain as well "the supremacy and supreme authority of the King's majesty that now is as the abolishing of the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome."

The submission to Rome.

But with the later changes of the Protectorate Gardiner had seen his dream of a national yet orthodox Church vanish away. He had seen how inevitably severance from

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

Rome drew with it a connexion with the Protestant Churches and a repudiation of Catholic belief. In the hours of imprisonment his mind fell back on the old ecclesiastical order with which the old spiritual order seemed inextricably entwined, and he was ready now to submit to the Papacy as the one means of preserving the faith to which he clung. His attitude was of the highest significance, for Gardiner more than anyone was a representative of the dominant English opinion of his day. As the moderate party which had supported the policy of Henry the Eighth saw its hopes disappear, it ranged itself, like the Bishop, on the side of a unity which could now only be brought about by reconciliation with Rome. The effort of the Protestants in Wyatt's insurrection to regain their power and revive the system of the Protectorate served only to give a fresh impulse to this drift of conservative opinion. Mary therefore found little opposition to her plans. The peers were won over by Philip through the pensions he lavished among them, while pressure was unscrupulously used by the Council to secure a compliant House of Commons. When the Parliament met in November these measures were found to have been successful. The attainder of Reginald Pole, who had been appointed by the Pope to receive the submission of the realm, was reversed; and the Legate entered London by the river with his cross gleaming from the prow of his barge. He was solemnly welcomed in full Parliament The two Houses decided by a formal vote to return to the obedience of the Papal See; on the assurance of Pole in the Pope's name that holders of church lands should not be disturbed in their possession the statutes abolishing Papal jurisdiction in England were repealed; and Lords and Commons received on their knees an absolution which freed the realm from the guilt incurred by its schism and heresy

Mary's difficulties.

But, even in the hour of her triumph, the temper both of Parliament and the nation warned the Queen of the

failure of her hope to bind England to a purely Catholic policy. The growing independence of the two Houses was seen in the impossibility of procuring from them any change in the order of succession. The victory of Rome was incomplete so long as its right of dispensation was implicitly denied by a recognition of Elizabeth's legitimacy, and Mary longed to avenge her mother by humbling the child of Anne Boleyn. But in spite of Pole's efforts and the Queen's support a proposal to oust her sister from the line of succession could not even be submitted to the Houses, nor could their assent be won to the postponing the succession of Elizabeth to that of Philip. The temper of the nation at large was equally decided. In the first Parliament of Mary a proposal to renew the laws against heresy had been thrown out by the Lords, even after the failure of Wyatt's insurrection. Philip's influence secured the re-enactment of the statute of Henry the Fifth in the Parliament which followed his arrival; but the sullen discontent of London compelled its Bishop, Bonner, to withdraw a series of articles of enquiry, by which he hoped to purge his diocese of heresy, and even the Council was divided on the question of persecution. In the very interests of Catholicism the Emperor himself counselled prudence and delay. Philip gave the same counsel. From the moment of his arrival the young King exercized a powerful influence over the Government, and he was gradually drawing into his hands the whole direction of affairs. But bigot as he was in matters of faith, Philip's temper was that of a statesman, not of a fanatic. If he came to England resolute to win the country to union with the Church, his conciliatory policy was already seen in the concessions he wrested from the Papacy in the matter of the Church lands, and his aim was rather to hold England together and to give time for a reaction of opinion than to revive the old discord by any measures of severity. It was indeed only from a united and contented England that he could hope for effective aid in the struggle of his

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction, 1553-1558.

The persecution.

house with France, and in spite of his pledges Philip's one aim in marrying Mary was to secure that aid.

But whether from without or from within warning was wasted on the fierce bigotry of the Queen. It was, as Gardiner asserted, not at the counsel of her ministers but by her own personal will that the laws against heresy had been laid before Parliament; and now that they were enacted Mary pressed for their execution. Her resolve was probably quickened by the action of the Protestant zealots. The failure of Wyatt's revolt was far from taming the enthusiasm of the wilder reformers. The restoration of the old worship was followed by outbreaks of bold defiance. A tailor of St. Giles in the Fields shaved a dog with the priestly tonsure. A cat was found hanging in the Cheap "with her head shorn, and the likeness of a vestment cast over her, with her forefeet tied together and a round piece of paper like a singing cake between them." Yet more galling were the ballads which were circulated in mockery of the mass, the pamphlets which came from the exiles over sea, the seditious broadsides dropped in the streets, the interludes in which the most sacred acts of the old religion were flouted with ribald mockery. All this defiance only served to quicken afresh the purpose of the Queen. But it was not till the opening of 1555, when she had already been a year and a half on the throne, that the opposition of her councillors was at last mastered and the persecution began. In February the deprived bishop of Gloucester, Hooper, was burned in his cathedral city, a London vicar, Lawrence Saunders, at Coventry, and Rogers, a prebendary of St. Paul's, at London. Ferrar, the deprived bishop of St. David's, who was burned at Caermarthen, was one of eight victims who suffered in March. Four followed in April and May, six in June, eleven in July, eighteen in August, eleven in September. In October Ridley, the deprived bishop of London, was drawn with Latimer from their prison at Oxford. "Play the man, Master Ridley!" cried the old preacher of the Reformation

CHAP. II. — The Catholic Reaction. — 1553–1558. — *Rowland Taylor.*

s the flames shot up around him; "we shall this day light p such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust hall never be put out."

If the Protestants had not known how to govern indeed, ey knew how to die; and the cause which prosperity ad ruined revived in the dark hour of persecution. The emory of their violence and greed faded away as they assed unwavering to their doom. Such a story as that of owland Taylor, the Vicar of Hadleigh, tells us more of e work which was now begun, and of the effect it was kely to produce, than pages of historic dissertation. aylor, who as a man of mark had been one of the first ictims chosen for execution, was arrested in London, and ondemned to suffer in his own parish. His wife, "sus- ecting that her husband should that night be carried way," had waited through the darkness with her children 1 the porch of St. Botolph's beside Aldgate. "Now when he sheriff his company came against St. Botolph's Church lizabeth cried, saying, 'O my dear father! Mother! other! here is my father led away!' Then cried his ife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?'—for it was a ery dark morning, that the one could not see the other. r. Taylor answered, 'I am here, dear wife,' and stayed. he sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the heriff said, 'Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him peak to his wife.' Then came she to him, and he took is daughter Mary in his arms, and he and his wife and lizabeth knelt down and said the Lord's prayer. At hich sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers thers of the company. After they had prayed he rose up nd kissed his wife and shook her by the hand, and said, Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet n my conscience! God shall still be a father to my hildren.' . . . Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, ear Rowland! I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Iadleigh.'

"All the way Dr. Taylor was merry and cheerful as one

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. . . . Coming within two miles of Hadleigh he desired to light off his horse, which done he leaped and set a frisk or twain as men commonly do for dancing. 'Why, master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriff, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, Master Sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house!' . . . The streets of Hadleigh were beset on both sides with men and women of the town and country who waited to see him; whom when they beheld so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried, 'Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us!'" The journey was at last over. "'What place is this,' he asked, 'and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered together?' It was answered, 'It is Oldham Common, the place where you must suffer, and the people are come to look upon you.' Then said he, 'Thanked be God, I am even at home!' . . . . But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears and cried, saying, 'God save thee, good Dr Taylor; God strengthen thee and help thee; the Holy Ghost comfort thee!' He wished, but was not suffered, to speak. When he had prayed, he went to the stake and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch-barrel which they had set for him to stand on, and so stood with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together and his eyes towards heaven, and so let himself be burned." One of the executioners "cruelly cast a fagot at him, which hit upon his head and brake his face that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, 'O friend, I have harm enough—what needed that?'" One more act of brutality brought his sufferings to an end. "So stood he still without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till Soyce with a halberd struck him on the head that the brains fell out, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire."

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558. *The area of the Martyrdoms.*

The terror of death was powerless against men like these. Bonner, the Bishop of London, to whom, as bishop of the diocese in which the Council sate, its victims were generally delivered for execution, but who, in spite of the nickname and hatred which his official prominence in the work of death earned him, seems to have been naturally a good-humoured and merciful man, asked a youth who was brought before him whether he thought he could bear the fire. The boy at once held his hand without flinching in the flame of a candle that stood by. Rogers, a fellow-worker with Tyndale in the translation of the Bible, and one of the foremost among the Protestant preachers, died bathing his hands in the flame "as if it had been in cold water." Even the commonest lives gleamed for a moment into poetry at the stake. "Pray for me," a boy, William Brown, who had been brought home to Brentwood to suffer, asked of the bystanders. "I will pray no more for thee," one of them replied, "than I will pray for a dog." "'Then,' said William, 'Son of God, shine upon me;' and immediately the sun in the elements shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face that he was constrained to look another way; whereat the people mused because it was so dark a little time before." Brentwood lay within a district on which the hand of the Queen fell heavier than elsewhere The persecution was mainly confined to the more active and populous parts of the country, to London, Kent, Sussex, and the Eastern Counties. Of the two hundred and eighty whom we know to have suffered during the last three years and a half of Mary's reign more than forty were burned in London, seventeen in the neighbouring village of Stratford-le-Bow, four in Islington, two in Southwark, and one each at Barnet, St. Albans, and Ware. Kent, at that time a home of mining and manufacturing industry, suffered as heavily as London. Of its sixty martyrs more than forty were furnished by Canterbury, which was then but a city of some few thousand inhabitants, and seven by Maidstone. The remaining eight suffered at Rochester,

CHAP. II. — The Catholic Reaction. — 1553-1558.

Ashford, and Dartford. Of the twenty-five who died in Sussex the little town of Lewes sent seventeen to the fire. Seventy were contributed by the Eastern Counties, the seat of the woollen manufacture. Beyond these districts executions were rare. Westward of Sussex we find the record of but a dozen martyrdoms, six of which were at Bristol, and four at Salisbury. Chester and Wales contributed but four sufferers to the list. In the Midland Counties between Thames and the Humber only twenty-four suffered martyrdom. North of the Humber we find the names of but two Yorkshiremen burned at Bedale.

Failure of the persecution.

But heavily as the martyrdoms fell on the district within which they were practically confined, and where as we may conclude Protestantism was more dominant than elsewhere, the work of terror failed in the very ends for which it was wrought. The old spirit of insolent defiance, of outrageous violence, rose into fresh life at the challenge of persecution. A Protestant hung a string of puddings round a priest's neck in derision of his beads. The restored images were grossly insulted The old scurrilous ballads against the mass and relics were heard in the streets. Men were goaded to sheer madness by the bloodshed and violence about them. One miserable wretch, driven to frenzy, stabbed the priest of St. Margaret's as he stood with the chalice in his hand. It was a more formidable sign of the times that acts of violence such as these no longer stirred the people at large to their former resentment. The horror of the persecution swept away all other feelings. Every death at the stake won hundreds to the cause for which the victims died "You have lost the hearts of twenty thousands that were rank Papists within these twelvemonths," a Protestant wrote triumphantly to Bonner. Bonner indeed, who had never been a very zealous persecutor, was sick of his work; and the energy of the bishops soon relaxed. But Mary had no thought of hesitation in the course she had entered on, and though the Imperial ambassador noted the rapid growth of public discontent "rattling

letters" from the council pressed the lagging prelates to fresh activity. Yet the persecution had hardly begun before difficulties were thickening round the Queen. In her passionate longing for an heir who would carry on her religious work Mary had believed herself to be with child; but in the summer of 1555 all hopes of any childbirth passed away, and the overthrow of his projects for the permanent acquisition of England to the House of Austria at once disenchanted Philip with his stay in the realm. But even had all gone well it was impossible for the King to remain longer in England. He was needed in the Netherlands to play his part in the memorable act which was to close the Emperor's political life. Already King of Naples and Lord of Milan, Philip received by his father's solemn resignation on the twenty-fifth of October the Burgundian heritage; and a month later Charles ceded to him the crowns of Castille and Aragon with their dependencies in the New World and in the Old. The Empire indeed passed to his uncle Ferdinand of Austria; but with this exception the whole of his father's vast dominions lay now in the grasp of Philip. Of the realms which he ruled, England was but one and far from the greatest one, and even had he wished to return his continued stay there became impossible.

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

The Catholic revival.

He was forced to leave the direction of affairs to Cardinal Pole, who on the death of Gardiner in November 1555 took the chief place in Council. At once Papal Legate and chief minister of the Crown, Pole carried on that union of the civil and ecclesiastical authority which had been first seen in Wolsey and had formed the groundwork of the system of Cromwell. But he found himself hampered by difficulties which even the ability of Cromwell or Wolsey could hardly have met. The embassy which carried to Rome the submission of the realm found a fresh Pope, Paul the Fourth, on the throne. His accession marked the opening of a new era in the history of the Papacy. Till now the fortunes of Catholicism had been steadily sinking

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

to a lower ebb. With the Peace of Passau the Empire seemed lost to it. The new Protestant faith stood triumphant in the north of Germany, and it was already advancing to the conquest of the south. The nobles of Austria were forsaking the older religion. A Venetian ambassador estimated the German Catholics at little more than a tenth of the whole population of Germany. Eastward the nobles of Hungary and Poland became Protestants in a mass. In the west France was yielding more and more to heresy, and England had hardly been rescued from it by Mary's accession. Only where the dead hand of Spain lay heavy, in Castille, in Aragon, or in Italy, was the Reformation thoroughly crushed out; and even the dead hand of Spain failed to crush heresy in the Low Countries. But at the moment when ruin seemed certain the older faith rallied to a new resistance. While Protestantism was degraded and weakened by the prostitution of the Reformation to political ends, by the greed and worthlessness of the German princes who espoused its cause, by the factious lawlessness of the nobles in Poland and the Huguenots in France, while it wasted its strength in theological controversies and persecutions, in the bitter and venomous discussions between the Churches which followed Luther and the Churches which followed Zwingli or Calvin, the great communion which it assailed felt at last the uses of adversity. The Catholic world rallied round the Council of Trent. In the very face of heresy the Catholic faith was anew settled and defined. The Papacy was owned afresh as the centre of Catholic union. The enthusiasm of the Protestants was met by a counter enthusiasm among their opponents. New religious orders rose to meet the wants of the day; the Capuchins became the preachers of Catholicism, the Jesuits became not only its preachers but its directors, its schoolmasters, its missionaries, its diplomatists. Their organization, their blind obedience, their real ability, their fanatical zeal, galvanized the pulpit, the school, the confessional, into a new life.

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction.

1553-1558.

Paul the Fourth.

It was this movement, this rally of Catholicism, which now placed its representative on the Papal throne. At the moment when Luther was first opening his attack on the Papacy Giovanni Caraffa had laid down his sees of Chieti and Brindisi to found the order of Theatines in a little house on the Pincian Hill. His aim was the reformation of the clergy, but the impulse which he gave told on the growing fervour of the Catholic world, and its issue was seen in the institution of the Capuchins and the Jesuits. Created Cardinal by Paul the Third, he found himself face to face with the more liberal theologians who were longing for a reconciliation between Lutheranism and the Papacy, such as Contarini and Pole, but his violent orthodoxy foiled their efforts in the conference at Ratisbon, and prevailed on the Pope to trust to the sterner methods of the Inquisition. As Caraffa wielded its powers, the Inquisition spread terror throughout Italy. At due intervals groups of heretics were burned before the Dominican Church at Rome; scholars like Peter Martyr were driven over sea; and the publication of an index of prohibited books gave a deathblow to Italian literature. On the verge of eighty the stern Inquisitor became Pope as Paul the Fourth. His conception of the Papal power was as high as that of Hildebrand or Innocent the Third, and he flung contemptuously aside the system of compromise which his predecessor had been brought to adopt by the caution of the Emperor. "Charles," he said, was a "favourer of heretics," and he laid to his charge the prosperity of Lutheranism in the Empire. That England should make terms for its return to obedience galled his pride, while his fanaticism would hear of no surrender of the property of the Church. Philip, who had wrested the concession from Julius the Third, had no influence over a Pope who hoped to drive the Spaniards from Italy, and Pole was suspected by Paul of a leaning to heresy.

England and the Papacy.

The English ambassadors found therefore a rough greeting when the terms of the submission were laid before the

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

Pope. Paul utterly repudiated the agreement which had been entered into between the Legate and the Parliament; he demanded the restoration of every acre of Church property; and he annulled all alienation of it by a general bull. His attitude undid all that Mary had done. In spite of the pompous reconciliation in which the Houses had knelt at the feet of Pole, England was still unreconciled to the Papacy, for the country and the Pope were at issue on a matter where concession was now impossible on either side. The Queen's own heart went with the Pope's demand. But the first step on which she ventured towards a compliance with it showed the difficulties she would have to meet. The grant of the first-fruits to Henry the Eighth had undoubtedly rested on his claim of supremacy over the Church; and now that this was at an end Mary had grounds for proposing their restoration to church purposes. But the proposal was looked on as a step towards the resumption of the monastic lands, and after a hot and prolonged debate at the close of 1555 the Commons only assented to it by a small majority. It was plain that no hearing would be given to the Pope's demand for a restoration of all Church property; great lords were heard to threaten that they would keep their lands so long as they had a sword by their side; and England was thus left at hopeless variance with the Papacy

Cranmer.

But difficult as Mary's task became, she clung as tenaciously as ever to her work of blood The martyrdoms went steadily on, and at the opening of 1556 the sanction of Rome enabled the Queen to deal with a victim whose death woke all England to the reality of the persecution. Far as he stood in character beneath many who had gone before him to the stake, Cranmer stood high above all in his ecclesiastical position To burn the Primate of the English Church for heresy was to shut out meaner victims from all hope of escape. And on the position of Cranmer none cast a doubt. The other prelates

who had suffered had been placed in their sees after the separation from Rome, and were hardly regarded as bishops by their opponents. But, whatever had been his part in the schism, Cranmer had received his Pallium from the Pope. He was, in the eyes of all, Archbishop of Canterbury, the successor of St. Augustine and of St. Thomas in the second see of Western Christendom. Revenge however and religious zeal alike urged the Queen to bring Cranmer to the stake. First among the many decisions in which the Archbishop had prostituted justice to Henry's will stood that by which he had annulled the King's marriage with Catharine and declared Mary a bastard. The last of his political acts had been to join, whether reluctantly or no, in the shameless plot to exclude Mary from the throne. His great position too made Cranmer more than any man a representative of the religious revolution which had passed over the land. His figure stood with those of Henry and of Cromwell on the frontispiece of the English Bible. The decisive change which had been given to the character of the Reformation under Edward was due wholly to Cranmer. It was his voice that men heard and still hear in the accents of the English Liturgy

CHAP. II. — The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

His death.

As an Archbishop, Cranmer's judgement rested with no meaner tribunal than that of Rome, and his execution had been necessarily delayed till its sentence could be given. It was not till the opening of 1556 that the Papal see convicted him of heresy. As a heretic he was now condemned to suffer at the stake. But the courage which Cranmer had shown since the accession of Mary gave way the moment his final doom was announced. The moral cowardice which had displayed itself in his miserable compliance with the lust and despotism of Henry displayed itself again in six successive recantations by which he hoped to purchase pardon.* But pardon was impossible; and Cranmer's strangely mingled nature found a power in its very weakness when he was brought into the church of St. Mary at Oxford on the twenty-first of

CHAP. II. — The Catholic Reaction. — 1553-1558.

March to repeat his recantation on the way to the stake. "Now," ended his address to the hushed congregation before him, "now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that ever I said or did in my life, and that is the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth; which here I now renounce and refuse as things written by my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death to save my life, if it might be. And, forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, my hand therefore shall be the first punished; for if I come to the fire, it shall be the first burned." "This was the hand that wrote it," he again exclaimed at the stake, "therefore it shall suffer first punishment;" and holding it steadily in the flame "he never stirred nor cried" till life was gone.

War with France.

It was with the unerring instinct of a popular movement that, among a crowd of far more heroic sufferers, the Protestants fixed, in spite of his recantations, on the martyrdom of Cranmer as the death-blow to Catholicism in England. For one man who felt within him the joy of Rowland Taylor at the prospect of the stake, there were thousands who felt the shuddering dread of Cranmer. The triumphant cry of Latimer could reach only hearts as bold as his own, while the sad pathos of the Primate's humiliation and repentance struck chords of sympathy and pity in the hearts of all. It is from that moment that we may trace the bitter remembrance of the blood shed in the cause of Rome; which, however partial and unjust it must seem to an historic observer, still lies graven deep in the temper of the English people. But the Queen struggled desperately on. She did what was possible to satisfy the unyielding Pope. In the face of the Parliament's significant reluctance even to restore the first-fruits to the Church, she refounded all she could of the abbeys which had been suppressed. One of the greatest of these, the Abbey of Westminster, was re-estab-

lished before the close of 1556, and John Feckenham installed as its abbot. Such a step could hardly fail to wake the old jealousy of any attempt to reclaim the Church lands, and thus to alienate the nobles and gentry from the Queen. They were soon to be alienated yet more by her breach of the solemn covenant on which her marriage was based. Even the most reckless of her counsellors felt the unwisdom of aiding Philip in his strife with France. The accession of England to the vast dominion which the Emperor had ceded to his son in 1555 all but realized the plans of Ferdinand the Catholic for making the house of Austria master of Western Christendom. France was its one effective foe; and the overthrow of France in the war which was going on between the two powers would leave Philip without a check. How keenly this was felt at the English council-board was seen in the resistance which was made to Philip's effort to drag his new realm into the war. Such an effort was in itself a crowning breach of faith, for the King's marriage had been accompanied by a solemn pledge that England should not be drawn into the strifes of Spain. But Philip knew little of good faith when his interest was at stake. The English fleet would give him the mastery of the seas, English soldiers would turn the scale in Flanders, and at the opening of 1557 the King again crossed the Channel and spent three months in pressing his cause on Mary and her advisers.

Loss of Calais.

"He did more," says a Spanish writer of the time, "than any one would have believed possible with that proud and indomitable nation." What he was most aided by was provocation from France. A body of refugees who had found shelter there landed in Yorkshire in the spring; and their leader, Thomas Stafford, a grandson of the late Duke of Buckingham, called the people to rise against the tyranny of foreigners and "the satanic designs of an unlawful Queen." The French King hoped that a rising would give the Queen work at home; but the revolt was easily crushed, and the insult enabled Mary to over-

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

ride her counsellors' reluctance and to declare war against France. The war opened with triumphs both on land and at sea. The junction of the English fleet made Philip master of the Channel. Eight thousand men, "all clad in their green," were sent to Flanders under Lord Pembroke, and joined Philip's forces in August in time to take part in the great victory of St. Quentin. In October the little army returned home in triumph, but the gleam of success vanished suddenly away. In the autumn of 1557 the English ships were defeated in an attack on the Orkneys. In January 1558 the Duke of Guise flung himself with characteristic secrecy and energy upon Calais and compelled it to surrender before succour could arrive. "The chief jewel of the realm," as Mary herself called it, was suddenly reft away; and the surrender of Guisnes, which soon followed, left England without a foot of land on the Continent.

Mary and Ireland.

Bitterly as the blow was felt, the Council, though passionately pressed by the Queen, could find neither money nor men for any attempt to recover the town. The war indeed went steadily for Spain and her allies; and Philip owed his victory at Gravelines in the summer of 1558 mainly to the opportune arrival of ten English ships of war which opened fire on the flank of the French army that lay open to the sea. But England could not be brought to take further part in the contest. The levies which were being raised mutinied and dispersed. The forced loan to which Mary was driven to resort came in slowly. The treasury was drained not only by the opening of the war with France but by the opening of a fresh strife in Ireland. To the struggle of religion which had begun there under the Protectorate the accession of Mary had put an end. The shadowy form of the earlier Irish Protestantism melted quietly away. There were in fact no Protestants in Ireland save the new bishops; and when Bale had fled over sea from his diocese of Ossory and his fellow-prelates had been deprived the Irish

Church resumed its old appearance. No attempt indeed was made to restore the monasteries, and Mary exercized her supremacy, deposed or appointed bishops, and repudiated Papal interference with her ecclesiastical acts as vigorously as her father. But the Mass was restored, the old modes of religious worship were again held in honour, and religious dissension between the Government and its Irish subjects came for the time to an end. With the close however of one danger came the rise of another. England was growing tired of the policy of conciliation which had been steadily pursued by Henry the Eighth and his successor. As yet it had been rewarded with precisely the sort of success which Wolsey and Cromwell anticipated. The chiefs had come quietly in to the plan, and their septs had followed them in submission to the new order. "The winning of the Earl of Desmond was the winning of the rest of Munster with small charges. The making O'Brien an Earl made all that country obedient." The Macwilliam became Lord Clanrickard, and the Fitzpatricks Barons of Upper Ossory. A visit of the great northern chief who had accepted the title of Earl of Tyrone to the English Court was regarded as a marked step in the process of civilization.

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction.

1553-1558.

The Irish War.

In the south, where the system of English law was slowly spreading, the chieftains sate on the bench side by side with the English justices of the peace; and something had been done to check the feuds and disorder of the wild tribes between Limerick and Tipperary. "Men may pass quietly throughout these countries without danger of robbery or other displeasure." In the Clanrickard county, once wasted with war, "ploughing increaseth daily." In Tyrone and the north however the old disorder reigned without a check; and everywhere the process of improvement tried the temper of the English Deputies by the slowness of its advance. The only hope of any real progress lay in patience; and there were signs that the Government at Dublin found it hard to wait. The

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

"rough handling" of the chiefs by Sir Edward Bellingham, a Lord Deputy under the Protector Somerset, roused a spirit of revolt that only subsided when the poverty of the Exchequer forced him to withdraw the garrisons he had planted in the heart of the country. His successor in Mary's reign, Lord Sussex, made raid after raid to no purpose on the obstinate tribes of the north, burning in one the Cathedral of Armagh and three other churches. A far more serious breach in the system of conciliation was made when the project of English colonization which Henry had steadily rejected was adopted by the same Lord Deputy, and when the country of the O'Connors was assigned to English settlers and made shire-land under the names of King's and Queen's Counties in honour of Philip and Mary. A savage warfare began at once between the planters and the dispossessed septs, a warfare which only ended in the following reign in the extermination of the Irishmen, and commissioners were appointed to survey waste lands with the aim of carrying the work of colonization into other districts. The pressure of the war against France put an end to these wider projects, but the strife in Meath went savagely on and proved a sore drain to the Exchequer.

Scotland and Protestantism.

Nor was Mary without difficulties in the North. Religiously as well as politically her reign told in a marked way on the fortunes of Scotland. If the Queen's policy failed to crush Protestantism in England, it gave a new impulse to it in the northern realm. In Scotland the wealth and worldliness of the great churchmen had long ago spread a taste for heresy among the people; and Lollardry survived as a power north of the border long after it had almost died out to the south of it. The impulse of the Lutheran movement was seen in the diffusion of the new opinions by a few scholars, such as Wishart and Hamilton; but though Henry the Eighth pressed his nephew James the Fifth to follow him in the work he was doing in England, it was plain that the

The Cathol Reacti 1553 1558

Scotch reformers could look for little favour from the Crown. The policy of the Scottish kings regarded the Church as their ally against the turbulent nobles, and James steadily held its enemies at bay. The Regent, Mary of Guise, clung to the same policy. But stoutly as the whole nation withstood the English efforts to acquire a political supremacy, the religious revolution in England told more and more on the Scotch nobles. No nobility was so poor as that of Scotland, and nowhere in Europe was the contrast between their poverty and the riches of the Church so great. Each step of the vast spoliation that went on south of the border, the confiscation of the lesser abbeys, the suppression of the greater, the secularization of chauntries and hospitals, woke a fresh greed in the baronage of the north. The new opinions soon found disciples among them. It was a group of Protestant nobles who surprized the Castle of St. Andrews and murdered Cardinal Beaton. The "Gospellers" from the Lowlands already formed a marked body in the army that fought at Pinkie Cleugh. As yet however the growth of the new opinions had been slow, and there had been till now little public show of resistance to the religion of the State.

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With the accession of Mary however all was changed. Under Henry and Edward the Catholicism of Scotland had profited by the national opposition to a Protestant England; but now that Catholicism was again triumphant in England Protestantism became far less odious to the Scotch statesmen. A still greater change was wrought by the marriage with Philip. Such a match, securing as it did to England the aid of Spain in any future aggression upon Scotland, became a danger to the northern realm which not only drew her closer to France but forced her to give shelter and support to the sectaries who promised to prove a check upon Mary. Many of the exiles therefore who left England for the sake of religion found a refuge in Scotland. Amongst these was John Knox. Knox had been one of the

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

followers of Wishart; he had acted as pastor to the Protestants who after Beaton's murder held the Castle of St. Andrews, and had been captured with them by a French force in the summer of 1547. The Frenchmen sent the heretics to the galleys; and it was as a galley slave in one of their vessels that Knox next saw his native shores. As the vessel lay tossing in the bay of St Andrews, a comrade bade him look to the land, and asked him if he knew it. "I know it well" was the answer; "for I see the steeple of that place where God first in public opened my mouth to His glory; and I am fully persuaded, how weak that ever I now appear, I shall not depart this life till my tongue glorify His holy name in the same place!" It was long however before he could return. Released at the opening of 1549, Knox found shelter in England, where he became one of the most stirring among the preachers of the day, and was offered a bishopric by Northumberland Mary's accession drove him again to France. But the new policy of the Regent now opened Scotland to the English refugees, and it was as one of these that Knox returned in 1555 to his own country Although he soon withdrew to take charge of the English congregation at Frankfort and Geneva his energy had already given a decisive impulse to the new movement. In a gathering at the house of Lord Erskine he persuaded the assembly to "refuse all society with idolatry, and bind themselves to the uttermost of their power to maintain the true preaching of the Evangile, as God should offer to their preachers an opportunity." The confederacy woke anew the jealousy of the government, and persecution revived. But some of the greatest nobles now joined the reforming cause. The Earl of Morton, the head of the house of Douglas, the Earl of Argyle, the greatest chieftain of the west, and above all a bastard son of the late King, Lord James Stuart, who bore as yet the title of prior of St. Andrews, but who was to be better known afterwards as the Earl of Murray, placed them-

CHAP. II. *The Catholic Reaction.* *1553-1558.*

selves at the head of the movement. The remonstrances of Knox from his exile at Geneva stirred them to interfere in behalf of the persecuted Protestants; and at the close of 1557 these nobles united with the rest of the Protestant leaders in an engagement which became memorable as the first among those Covenants which were to give shape and colour to Scotch religion

The First Covenant.

"We," ran this solemn bond, "perceiving how Satan in his members, the Antichrists of our time, cruelly doth rage, seeking to overthrow and to destroy the Evangel of Christ, and His Congregation, ought according to our bounden duty to strive in our Master's cause even unto the death, being certain of our victory in Him. The which our duty being well considered, we do promise before the Majesty of God and His Congregation that we, by His grace, shall with all diligence continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God and His Congregation, and shall labour at our possibility to have faithful ministers, purely and truly to minister Christ's Evangel and sacraments to His people. We shall maintain them, nourish them, and defend them, the whole Congregation of Christ and every member thereof, at our whole power and wearing of our lives, against Satan and all wicked power that does intend tyranny or trouble against the foresaid Congregation Unto the which Holy Word and Congregation we do join us, and also do forsake and renounce the congregation of Satan with all the superstitious abomination and idolatry thereof: and moreover shall declare ourselves manifestly enemies thereto by this our faithful promise before God, testified to His Congregation by our subscription at these presents."

Scotland and Protestantism.

The Covenant of the Scotch nobles marked a new epoch in the strife of religions. Till now the reformers had opposed the doctrine of nationality to the doctrine of Catholicism. In the teeth of the pretensions which the Church advanced to a uniformity of religion in every land,

whatever might be its differences of race or government, the first Protestants had advanced the principle that each prince or people had alone the right to determine its form of faith and worship. "Cujus regio" ran the famous phraze which embodied their theory, "ejus religio." It was the acknowledgement of this principle that the Lutheran princes obtained at the Diet of Spires; it was on this principle that Henry based his Act of Supremacy. Its strength lay in the correspondence of such a doctrine with the political circumstances of the time. It was the growing feeling of nationality which combined with the growing developement of monarchical power to establish the theory that the political and religious life of each nation should be one, and that the religion of the people should follow the faith of the prince. Had Protestantism, as seemed at one time possible, secured the adhesion of all the European princes, such a theory might well have led everywhere as it led in England to the establishment of the worst of tyrannies, a tyranny that claims to lord alike over both body and soul. The world was saved from this danger by the tenacity with which the old religion still held its power. In half the countries of Europe the disciples of the new opinions had soon to choose between submission to their conscience and submission to their prince; and a movement which began in contending for the religious supremacy of Kings ended in those wars of religion which arrayed nation after nation against their sovereigns. In this religious revolution Scotland led the way. Her Protestantism was the first to draw the sword against earthly rulers. The solemn "Covenant" which bound together her "Congregation" in the face of the regency, which pledged its members to withdraw from all submission to the religion of the State and to maintain in the face of the State their liberty of conscience, opened that vast series of struggles which ended in Germany with the Peace of Westphalia and in England with the Toleration Act of William the Third.

The 'Covenant' of the lords sounded a bold defiance to the Catholic reaction across the border. While Mary replaced the Prayer-book by the Mass, the Scotch lords resolved that wherever their power extended the Common Prayer should be read in all churches. While hundreds were going to the stake in England the Scotch nobles boldly met the burning of their preachers by a threat of war. "They trouble our preachers," ran their bold remonstrance against the bishops in the Queen-mother's presence; "they would murder them and us! shall we suffer this any longer? No, madam, it shall not be!" and therewith every man put on his steel bonnet. The Regent was helpless for the moment and could find refuge only in fair words, words so fair that for a while the sternest of the reformers believed her to be drifting to their faith. She was in truth fettered by the need of avoiding civil strife at a time when the war of England against France made a Scotch war against England inevitable. The nobles refused indeed to cross the border, but the threat of a Scotch invasion was one of the dangers against which Mary Tudor now found herself forced to provide. Nor was the uprise of Protestantism in Scotland the only result of her policy in giving fire and strength to the new religion Each step in the persecution had been marked by a fresh flight of preachers, merchants, and gentry across the seas. "Some fled into France, some into Flanders, and some into the high countries of the Empire." As early as 1554 we find groups of such refugees at Frankfort, Emden, Zurich, and Strassburg. Calvin welcomed some of them at Geneva; the "lords of Berne" suffered a group to settle at Aarau; a hundred gathered round the Duchess of Suffolk at Wesel. Amongst the exiles we find many who were to be bishops and statesmen in the coming reign. Sir Francis Knollys was at Frankfort, Sir Francis Walsingham travelled in France; among the divines were the later archbishops Grindal and Sandys, and the later bishops Horne, Parkhurst, Aylmer, Jewel, and Cox. Mingled with these were men

CHAP. — The Catho[lic] React[ion] 155[3] 155[8] — *The Exil[es]*

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

who had already played their part in Edward's reign, such as Poinet, the deprived Bishop of Winchester, Bale, the deprived Bishop of Ossory, and the preachers Lever and Knox.

The Extreme Protestants.

Gardiner had threatened that the fugitives should gnaw their fingers from hunger, but ample supplies reached them from London merchants and other partizans in England, and they seem to have lived in fair comfort while their brethren at home were "going to the fire." Their chief troubles sprang from strife among themselves. The hotter spirits among the English Protestants had seen with discontent the retention of much that they looked on as superstitious and Popish in even the last liturgy of Edward's reign. That ministers should still wear white surplices, that litanies should be sung, that the congregation should respond to the priest, that babes should be signed in baptism with the sign of the cross, that rings should be given in marriage, filled them with horror. Hooper, the leader of this party, refused when made bishop to don his rochet, and had only been driven by imprisonment to vest himself in "the rags of Popery." Trivial indeed as such questions seemed in themselves, an issue lay behind them which was enough to make men face worse evils than a prison. The royal supremacy, the headship of the Church, which Henry the Eighth claimed for himself and his successors, was, as we have seen, simply an application of the principle which the states of North Germany had found so effective in meeting the pretensions of the Emperor or the Pope. The same sentiment of national life took a new form in the preservation of whatever the change of religious thought left it possible to preserve in the national tradition of faith and worship. In the Lutheran churches, though the Mass was gone, reredos and crucifix remained untouched. In England the whole ecclesiastical machinery was jealously preserved. Its Church was still governed by bishops who traced their succession to the Apostles. The words of

its new Prayer-book adhered as closely as they might to the words of Missal and Breviary. What made such an arrangement possible was the weakness of the purely religious impulse in the earlier stages of the Reformation. In Germany indeed or in England, the pressure for theological change was small; the religious impulse told on but a small part, and that not an influential part of the population; it did in fact little more than quicken and bring into action the older and widely-felt passion for ecclesiastical independence.

Protestantism and the Supremacy.

But the establishment of this independence at once gave fresh force to the religious movement. From denouncing the Pope as a usurper of national rights men passed easily to denounce the Papal system as in itself anti-Christian. In setting aside the voice of the Papacy as a ground of faith the new churches had been forced to find a ground of faith in the Bible. But the reading and discussion of the Bible opened up a thousand questions of belief and ritual, and the hatred of Rome drew men more and more to find answers to such questions which were antagonistic to the creed and usages of a past that was identified in their eyes with the Papacy. Such questions could hardly fail to find an echo in the people at large. To the bulk of men ecclesiastical institutions are things dim and remote; and the establishment of ecclesiastical independence, though it gratified the national pride, could have raised little personal enthusiasm. But the direct and personal interest of every man seemed to lie in the right holding of religious truth, and thus the theological aspect of the Reformation tended more and more to supersede its political one. All that is generous and chivalrous in human feeling told in the same direction. To statesmen like Gardiner or Paget the acceptance of one form of faith or worship after another as one sovereign after another occupied the throne seemed, no doubt, a logical and inevitable result of their acceptance of the royal supremacy. But to the people at large there must have been something false and ignoble in the sight

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

of a statesman or a priest who had cast off the Mass under Edward to embrace it again under Mary, and who was ready again to cast it off at the will of Mary's successor. If worship and belief were indeed spiritual things, if they had any semblance of connexion with divine realities, men must have felt that it was impossible to put them on and off at a king's caprice. It was this, even more than the natural pity which they raised, that gave their weight to the Protestant martyrdoms under Mary. They stood out in emphatic protest against the doctrine of local religion, of a belief dictated by the will of kings. From the Primate of the Church to the "blind girl" who perished at Colchester, three hundred were found in England who chose rather to go to the fire than to take up again at the Queen's will what their individual conscience had renounced as a lie against God.

Calvin.

But from the actual assertion of such a right of the individual conscience to find and hold what was true, even those who witnessed for it by their death would have shrunk. Driven by sheer force of fact from the theory of a national and royal faith, men still shuddered to stand alone. The old doctrine of a Catholic Christianity flung over them its spell. Rome indeed they looked on as anti-Christ, but the doctrine which Rome had held so long and so firmly, the doctrine that truth should be coextensive with the world and not limited by national boundaries, that the Church was one in all countries and among all peoples, that there was a Christendom which embraced all kingdoms and a Christian law that ruled peoples and kings, became more and more the doctrine of Rome's bitterest opponents. It was this doctrine which found its embodiment in John Calvin, a young French scholar, driven in early manhood from his own country by the persecution of Francis the First. Calvin established himself at Basle, and produced there in 1535 at the age of twenty-six a book which was to form the theology of the Huguenot churches, his "Institutes of the Christian

Religion." What was really original in this work was Calvin's doctrine of the organization of the Church and of its relation to the State. The base of the Christian republic was with him the Christian man, elected and called of God, preserved by his grace from the power of sin, predestinate to eternal life. Every such Christian man is in himself a priest, and every group of such men is a Church, self-governing, independent of all save God, supreme in its authority over all matters ecclesiastical and spiritual. The constitution of such a church, where each member as a Christian was equal before God, necessarily took a democratic form. In Calvin's theory of Church government it is the Church which itself elects its lay elders and lay deacons for purposes of administration; it is with the approval and consent of the Church that elders and deacons with the existing body of pastors elect new ministers. It is through these officers that the Church exercizes its power of the keys, the power of diffusing the truth and the power of correcting error. To the minister belongs the preaching of the word and the direction of all religious instruction; to the body of ministers belongs the interpretation of scripture and the decision of doctrine. On the other hand the administration of discipline, the supervision of the moral conduct of each professing Christian, the admonition of the erring, the excommunication and exclusion from the body of the Church of the unbelieving and the utterly unworthy, belongs to the Consistory, the joint assembly of ministers and elders. To this discipline princes as well as common men are alike subject; princes as well as common men must take their doctrine from the ministers of the Church.

Calvinism.

The claims of the older faith to spiritual and ecclesiastical supremacy over the powers of earth reappeared in this theory. Calvin like the Papacy ignored all national independence, all pretensions of peoples as such to create their own system of church doctrine or church government. Doctrine and government he held to be already laid down

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1558-1588.

in the words of the Bible, and all questions that rose out of those words came under the decision of the ecclesiastical body of ministers. Wherever a reformed religion appeared, there was provided for it a simple but orderly organization which in its range and effectiveness rivalled that of the older Catholicism On the other hand this organization rested on a wholly new basis; spiritual and ecclesiastical power came from below not from above; the true sovereign in this Christian state was not Pope or Bishop but the Christian man. Despotic as the authority of pastor and elders seemed, pastor and elders were alike the creation of the whole congregation, and their judgement could in the last resort be adopted or set aside by it. Such a system stood out in bold defiance against the tendencies of the day. On its religious side it came into conflict with that principle of nationality, of ecclesiastical as well as civil subjection to the prince, on which the reformed Churches and above all the Church of England had till now been built up As a vast and consecrated democracy it stood in contrast with the whole social and political framework of the European nations Grave as we may count the faults of Calvinism, alien as its temper may in many ways be from the temper of the modern world, it is in Calvinism that the modern world strikes its roots, for it was Calvinism that first revealed the worth and dignity of Man Called of God, and heir of heaven, the trader at his counter and the digger in his field suddenly rose into equality with the noble and the king.

Calvin and the Exiles.

It was this system that Calvin by a singular fortune was able to put into actual working in the little city of Geneva, where the party of the Reformation had become master and called him in 1536 to be their spiritual head. Driven out but again recalled, his influence made Geneva from 1541 the centre of the Protestant world. The refugees who crowded to the little town from persecution in France, in the Netherlands, in England, found there an exact and formal doctrine, a rigid discipline of manners and faith,

a system of church government, a form of church worship, stripped, as they held, of the last remnant of the superstitions of the past. Calvin himself with his austere and frugal life, his enormous industry, his power of government, his quick decision, his undoubting self-confidence, his unswerving will, remained for three and twenty years till his death in 1564 supreme over Protestant opinion. His influence told heavily on England. From the hour of Cromwell's fall the sympathies of the English reformers had drawn them, not to the Lutheran Churches of North Germany, but to the more progressive Churches of the Rhineland and the Netherlands: and on the critical question of the Lord's Supper which mainly divided the two great branches of the Reformation Cranmer and his partizans became more definitely anti-sacramentarian as the years went by. At Edward's death the exiles showed their tendencies by seeking refuge not with the Lutheran Churches of North Germany but with the Calvinistic Churches of Switzerland or the Rhine; and contact with such leaders as Bullinger at Zurich or Calvin at Geneva could hardly fail to give fresh vigour to the party which longed for a closer union with the foreign churches and a more open breach with the past.

The troubles at Frankfort.

The results of this contact first showed themselves at Frankfort. At the instigation of Whittingham, who in Elizabeth's days became Dean of Durham, a body of English exiles that had found shelter there resolved to reform both worship and discipline. The obnoxious usages were expunged from the Prayer-book, omissions were made in the communion service, a minister and deacons chosen, and rules drawn up for church government after the Genevan model. Free at last "from all dregs of superstitious ceremonies" the Frankfort refugees thanked God "that had given them such a church in a strange land wherein they might hear God's holy word preached, the sacraments rightly ministered, and discipline used, which in their own country could never be obtained." But their invitation to the

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction.

1553-1558.

other English exiles to join them in the enjoyment of these blessings met with a steady repulse. Lever and the exiles at Zurich refused to come unless they might "altogether serve and praise God as freely and uprightly as the order last taken in the Church of England permitteth and presenteth, for we are fully determined to admit and use no other." The main body of the exiles who were then gathered at Strassburg echoed the refusal. Knox however, who had been chosen minister by the Frankfort congregation, moved rapidly forward, rejecting the communion service altogether as superstitious, and drawing up a new 'order' of worship after the Genevan model. But in the spring of 1555 these efforts were foiled by the arrival of fresh exiles from England of a more conservative turn: the reformers were outvoted; Knox was driven from the town by the magistrates 'in fear of the Emperor' whom he had outraged in an 'Admonition' to the English people which he had lately issued; and the English service was restored. Whittingham and his adherents, still resolute, as Bale wrote, "to erect a Church of the Purity" (we may perhaps trace in the sneer the origin of their later name of Puritans) found a fresh refuge at Basle and Geneva, where the leaders of the party occupied themselves in a metrical translation of the Psalms which left its traces on English psalmody and in the production of what was afterwards known as the Geneva Bible.

The seditious books.

Petty as this strife at Frankfort may seem, it marks the first open appearance of English Puritanism, and the beginning of a struggle which widened through the reign of Elizabeth till under the Stuarts it broke England in pieces. But busy as they were in strife among themselves, the exiles were still more busy in fanning the discontent at home. Books, pamphlets, broadsides, were written and sent for distribution to England. The violence of their language was incredible. No sooner had Bonner issued his injunctions than Bale denounced him in a fierce reply

as "a beastly belly-god and damnable dung-hill." With a spirit worthy of the "bloody bitesheeps" whom he attacked, the ex-Bishop of Ossory regretted that when Henry plucked down Becket's shrine he had not burned the idolatrous priests upon it. It probably mattered little to Bale that at the moment when he wrote not a single Protestant had as yet been sent to the stake; but language such as this was hardly likely to stir Mary to a spirit of moderation. The Spanish marriage gave the refugees a fairer opportunity of attack, and the Government was forced to make enquiries of the wardens of city gilds "whether they had seen or heard of any of these books which had come from beyond seas." The violence of the exiles was doubled by the suppression of Wyatt's revolt.• Poinet, the late Bishop of Winchester, who had taken part in it, fled over sea to write a "Sharp Tractate of political power" in which he discussed the question "whether it be lawful to depose an evil governor and kill a tyrant."

Knox and Goodman.

But with the actual outbreak of persecution and the death of Cranmer all restraint was thrown aside. In his "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women" Knox denounced Mary as a Jezebel, a traitress, and a bastard. He declared the rule of women to be against the law of Nature and of God. The duty, whether of the estates or people of the realm, was "first to remove from honour and authority that monster in nature; secondarily, if any presume to defend that impiety, they ought not to fear first to pronounce, then after to execute against them the sentence of death." To keep the oath of allegiance was "nothing but plain rebellion against God" "The day of vengeance," burst out the writer "which shall apprehend that horrible monster, Jezebel of England, and such as maintain her monstrous cruelty is already appointed in the counsel of the Eternal; and I verily believe that it is so nigh that she shall not reign so long in tyranny as hitherto she hath done, when God shall declare himself her enemy." Another exile, Goodman,

enquired "how superior powers ought to be obeyed of their subjects; and wherein they may lawfully by God's word be disobeyed and resisted." His book was a direct summons to rebellion. "By giving authority to an idolatrous woman" Goodman wrote to his English fellow-subjects, "ye have banished Christ and his Gospel. Then in taking the same authority from her you shall restore Christ and his word, and shall do well. In obeying her you have disobeyed God; then in disobeying her you shall please God." "Though it should appear at the first sight," he urged, "a great disorder that the people should take unto them the punishment of transgressions, yet when the magistrates and other officers cease to do their duties they are as it were without officers, yea, worse than if they had none at all, and then God giveth the sword into the people's hand" And what the people were to do with the sword Poinet had already put very clearly. It was the "ungodly serpent Mary" who was "the chief instrument of all this present misery in England" "Now both by God's laws and man's," concluded the bishop, "she ought to be punished with death, as an open idolatress in the sight of God, and a cruel murderer of His saints before men, and merciless traitress to her own native country."

Behind the wild rhetoric of words like these lay the new sense of a prophetic power, the sense of a divine commission given to the preachers of the Word to rebuke nobles and kings. At the moment when the policy of Cromwell crushed the Church as a political power and freed the growing Monarchy from the constitutional check which its independence furnished, a new check offered itself in the very enthusiasm which sprang out of the wreck of the great religious body. Men stirred with a new sense of righteousness and of a divine government of the world, men too whose natural boldness was quickened and fired by daily contact with the older seers who rebuked David or Jezebel, could not hold their peace in the presence of wrong. While nobles and statesmen were cowering in silence

before the dreaded power of the Kingship the preachers spoke bluntly out. Not only Latimer, but Knox, Grindal, and Lever had uttered fiery remonstrances against the plunderers of Edward's reign. Bradford had threatened them with the divine judgement which at last overtook them. "'The judgement of the Lord! The judgement of the Lord!' cried he, with a lamentable voice and weeping tears." Wise or unwise, the pamphlets of the exiles only carried on this theory to its full developement. The great conception of the mediæval Church, that of the responsibility of Kings to a spiritual power, was revived at an hour when Kingship was trampling all responsibility to God or man beneath its feet. Such a revival was to have large and beneficial issues in our later history. Gathering strength under Elizabeth, it created at the close of her reign that moral force of public opinion which under the name of Puritanism brought the acts and policy of our kings to the tests of reason and the Gospel. However ill directed that force might be, however erroneously such tests were often applied, it is to this new force that we owe the restoration of liberty and the establishment of religious freedom. As the voice of the first Christian preachers had broken the despotism of the Roman Empire, so the voice of the preachers of Puritanism broke the despotism of the English Monarchy.

Elizabeth.

But great as their issues were to be, for the moment these protests only quickened the persecution at home. We can hardly wonder that the arrival of Goodman's book in England in the summer of 1558 was followed by stern measures to prevent the circulation of such incentives to revolt. "Whereas divers books" ran a royal proclamation, "filled with heresy, sedition, and treason, have of late and be daily brought into the realm out of foreign countries and places beyond seas, and some also covertly printed within this realm and cast abroad in sundry parts thereof, whereby not only God is dishonoured but also encouragement is given to disobey

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

lawful princes and governors," any person possessing such books "shall be reported and taken for a rebel, and shall without delay be executed for that offence according to the order of martial law." But what really robbed these pamphlets of all force for harm was the prudence and foresight of the people itself. Never indeed did the nation show its patient good sense more clearly than in the later years of Mary's reign. While fires blazed in Smithfield and news of defeat came from over sea, while the hot voices of Protestant zealots hounded men on to assassination and revolt, the bulk of Englishmen looked quietly from the dying Queen to the girl who in a little while must wear her crown What nerved men to endure the shame and bloodshed about them was the certainty of the speedy succession of the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth was now in her twenty-fifth year. Personally she had much of her mother's charm with more than her mother's beauty. Her figure was commanding, her face long but queenly and intelligent, her eyes quick and fine. She had grown up amidst the liberal culture of Henry's court a bold horsewoman, a good shot, a graceful dancer, a skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar. Even among the highly-trained women who caught the impulse of the New Learning she stood in the extent of her acquirements without a peer. Ascham, who succeeded Grindal and Cheke in the direction of her studies, tells us how keen and resolute was Elizabeth's love of learning, even in her girlhood. At sixteen she already showed "a man's power of application" to her books. She had read almost the whole of Cicero and a great part of Livy. She began the day with the study of the New Testament in Greek, and followed this up by reading selected orations of Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles. She could speak Latin with fluency and Greek moderately well. Her love of classical culture lasted through her life. Amidst the press and cares of her later reign we find Ascham recording how "after dinner I went up to read with the Queen's

majesty that noble oration of Demosthenes against Æschines." At a later time her Latin served her to rebuke the insolence of a Polish ambassador, and she could "rub up her rusty Greek" at need to bandy pedantry with a Vice-Chancellor. But Elizabeth was far as yet from being a mere pedant. She could already speak French and Italian as fluently as her mother-tongue. In later days we find her familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. The purity of her literary taste, the love for a chaste and simple style, which Ascham noted with praise in her girlhood, had not yet perished under the influence of euphuism. But even amidst the affectation and love of anagrams and puerilities which sullied her later years Elizabeth remained a lover of letters and of all that was greatest and purest in letters. She listened with delight to the "Faery Queen," and found a smile for "Master Spenser" when he appeared in her presence. CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

From the bodily and mental energy of her girlhood, the close of Edward's reign drew Elizabeth at nineteen to face the sterner problems of religion and politics. In the daring attempt of Northumberland to place Jane Grey on the throne Elizabeth's rights were equally set aside with those of Mary; and the first public act of the girl was to call the gentry to her standard and to join her sister with five hundred followers in her train. But the momentary union was soon dissolved. The daughter of Catharine could look with little but hate on the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth's tendency to the "new religion" jarred with the Queen's bigotry; and the warnings of the imperial ambassador were hardly needful to spur Mary to watch jealously a possible pretender to her throne. The girl bent to the Queen's will in hearing mass, but her manner showed that the compromise was merely a matter of obedience, and fed the hopes of the Protestant zealots who saw in the Spanish marriage a chance of driving Mary from the throne. The resolve which the Queen showed to cancel her sister's right of *Elizabeth and Mary.*

CHAP. II. The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.

succession only quickened the project for setting Elizabeth in her place; and it was to make Elizabeth their sovereign that Suffolk rose in Leicestershire and Wyatt and his Kentishmen marched against London Bridge The failure of the rising seemed to ensure her doom. The Emperor pressed for her death as a security for Philip on his arrival; and the detection of a correspondence with the French King served as a pretext for her committal to the Tower The fierce Tudor temper broke through Elizabeth's self-control as she landed at Traitor's Gate "Are all these harnessed men there for me?" she cried as she saw the guard, "it needed not for me, being but a weak woman!" and passionately calling on the soldiers to "bear witness that I come as no traitor!" she flung herself down on a stone in the rain and refused to enter her prison. "Better sitting here than in a worse place," she cried; "I know not whither you will bring me." But Elizabeth's danger was less than it seemed. Wyatt denied to the last her complicity in the revolt, and in spite of Gardiner's will to "go roundly to work" with her the Lords of the Council forced Mary to set her free. The Queen's terrors however revived with her hopes of a child in the summer of 1555. To Mary her sister seemed the one danger which threatened the succession of her coming babe and the vast issues which hung on it, and Elizabeth was summoned to her sister's side and kept a close prisoner at Hampton Court. Philip joined in this precaution, for "holding her in his power he could depart safely and without peril" in the event of the Queen's death in childbirth; and other plans were perhaps already stirring his breast. Should Mary die, a fresh match might renew his hold on England; "he might hope," writes the Venetian ambassador "with the help of many of the nobility, won over by his presents and favours, to marry her (Elizabeth) again, and thus succeed anew to the crown."

Elizabeth and Philip.

But whatever may have been Philip's designs, the time had not as yet come for their realization; the final dis-

appointment of the Queen's hopes of childbirth set Elizabeth free, and in July she returned to her house at Ashridge. From this moment her position was utterly changed. With the disappearance of all chance of offspring from the Queen and the certainty of Mary's coming death her sister's danger passed away. Elizabeth alone stood between England and the succession of Mary Stuart; and, whatever might be the wishes of the Queen, the policy of the House of Austria forced it to support even the daughter of Anne Boleyn against a claimant who would bind England to the French monarchy. From this moment therefore Philip watched jealously over Elizabeth's safety. On his departure for the Continent he gave written instructions to the Queen to show favour to her sister, and the charge was repeated to those of his followers whom he left behind him. What guarded her even more effectually was the love of the people. When Philip at a later time claimed Elizabeth's gratitude for his protection she told him bluntly that her gratitude was really due neither to him nor her nobles, though she owned her obligations to both, but to the English people. It was they who had saved her from death and hindered all projects for barring her right to the throne. "It is the people," she said, "who have placed me where I am now." It was indeed their faith in Elizabeth's speedy succession that enabled Englishmen to bear the bloodshed and shame of Mary's later years, and to wait patiently for the end.

Cecil.

Nor were these years of waiting without value for Elizabeth herself. The steady purpose, the clear perception of a just policy which ran through her wonderful reign, were formed as the girl looked coolly on at the chaos of bigotry and misrule which spread before her. More and more she realized what was to be the aim of her after life, the aim of reuniting the England which Edward and Mary alike had rent into two warring nations, of restoring again that English independence which Mary was trailing at the feet of Spain. With such an aim she could draw to her the

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction.

1553–1558.

men who, indifferent like herself to purely spiritual considerations, and estranged from Mary's system rather by its political than its religious consequences, were anxious for the restoration of English independence and English order. It was among these "Politicals," as they were soon to be called, that Elizabeth found at this moment a counsellor who was to stand by her side through the long years of her after reign. William Cecil sprang from the smaller gentry whom the changes of the time were bringing to the front. He was the son of a Yeoman of the Wardrobe at Henry's court; but his abilities had already raised him at the age of twenty-seven to the post of secretary to the Duke of Somerset, and through Somerset's Protectorate he remained high in his confidence. He was seized by the Lords on the Duke's arrest, and even sent to the Tower; but he was set at liberty with his master, and his ability was now so well known that a few months later saw him Secretary of State under Northumberland. The post and the knighthood which accompanied it hardly compensated for the yoke which Northumberland's pride laid upon all who served him, or for the risks in which his ambition involved them. Cecil saw with a fatal clearness the silent opposition of the whole realm to the system of the Protectorate, and the knowledge of this convinced him that the Duke's schemes for a change in the succession were destined to failure. On the disclosure of the plot to set Mary aside he withdrew for some days from the Court, and even meditated flight from the country, till fear of the young King's wrath drew him back to share in the submission of his fellow counsellors and to pledge himself with them to carry the new settlement into effect. But Northumberland had no sooner quitted London than Cecil became the soul of the intrigues by which the royal Council declared themselves in Mary's favour. His desertion of the Duke secured him pardon from the Queen, and though he was known to be in heart "a heretic" he continued at

court, conformed like Elizabeth to the established religion, confessed and attended mass. Cecil was employed in bringing Pole to England and in attending him in embassies abroad. But his caution held him aloof from any close connexion with public affairs. He busied himself in building at Burghley and in the culture of the Church lands he had won from Edward the Sixth, while he drew closer to the girl who alone could rescue England from the misgovernment of Mary's rule. Even before the Queen's death it was known that Cecil would be the chief counsellor of the coming reign. "I am told for certain," the Spanish ambassador wrote to Philip after a visit to Elizabeth during the last hours of Mary's life, "that Cecil who was secretary to King Edward will be her secretary also. He has the character of a prudent and virtuous man, although a heretic." But it was only from a belief that Cecil retained at heart the convictions of his earlier days that men could call him a heretic. In all outer matters of faith or worship he conformed to the religion of the state.

The Politicals.

It is idle to charge Cecil, or the mass of Englishmen who conformed with him in turn to the religion of Henry, of Edward, of Mary, and of Elizabeth, with baseness or hypocrisy. They followed the accepted doctrine of the time —that every realm, through its rulers, had the sole right of determining what should be the form of religion within its bounds. What the Marian persecution was gradually pressing on such men was a conviction, not of the falsehood of such a doctrine, but of the need of limiting it. Under Henry, under Edward, under Mary, no distinction had been drawn between inner belief and outer conformity. Every English subject was called upon to adjust his conscience as well as his conduct to the varying policy of the state. But the fires of Smithfield had proved that obedience such as this could not be exacted save by a persecution which filled all England with horror. Such a persecution indeed failed in the very end for which it

CHAP. II.

The Catholic Reaction.

1553-1558.

was wrought. Instead of strengthening religious unity, it gave a new force to religious separation; it enlisted the conscience of the zealot in the cause of resistance; it secured the sympathy of the great mass of waverers to those who withstood the civil power. To Cecil, as to the purely political statesmen of whom he was the type, such a persecution seemed as needless as it was mischievous. Conformity indeed was necessary, for men could as yet conceive of no state without a religion or of civil obedience apart from compliance with the religious order of the state. But only outer conformity was needed. That no man should set up a worship other than that of the nation at large, that every subject should duly attend at the national worship, Cecil believed to be essential to public order. But he saw no need for prying into the actual beliefs of those who conformed to the religious laws of the realm, nor did he think that such beliefs could be changed by the fear of punishment. While refusing freedom of worship therefore, Cecil, like Elizabeth, was ready to concede freedom of conscience. And in this concession we can hardly doubt that the bulk of Englishmen went with him. Catholics shared with Protestants the horror of Mary's persecution. To Protestantism indeed the horror of the persecution had done much to give a force such as it had never had before. The number of Protestants grew with every murder done in the cause of Catholicism. But they still remained a small part of the realm. What the bulk of Englishmen had been driven to by the martyrdoms was not a change of creed, but a longing for religious peace and for such a system of government as, without destroying the spiritual oneness of the nation, would render a religious peace possible. And such a system of government Cecil and Elizabeth were prepared to give.

Mary's death.

We may ascribe to Cecil's counsels somewhat of the wise patience with which Elizabeth waited for the coming crown. Her succession was assured, and the throng of visitors to her presence showed a general sense that

he Queen's end was near. Mary stood lonely and lesolate in her realm. "I will not be buried while I am iving, as my sister was," Elizabeth said in later years. 'Do I not know how during her life every one hastened o me at Hatfield?" The bloodshed indeed went on more usily than ever. It had spread now from bishops and riests to the people itself, and the sufferers were sent in atches to the flames. In a single day thirteen victims, wo of them women, were burned at Stratford-le-Bow. Seventy-three Protestants of Colchester were dragged hrough the streets of London tied to a single rope. A lew commission for the suppression of heresy was exempted y royal authority from all restrictions of law which fettered ts activity. But the work of terror broke down before he silent revolt of the whole nation. The persecution ailed even to put an end to heretical worship. Not only lo we find ministers moving about in London and Kent to old "secret meetings of the Gospellers," but up to the middle of 1555 four parishes in Essex still persisted in using the English Prayer-book Open marks of sympathy at last began to be offered to the victims at the stake. 'There were seven men burned in Smithfield the twenty-eighth day of July," a Londoner writes in 1558, "a fearful and a cruel proclamation being made that under pain of present death no man should either approach nigh unto them, touch them, neither speak to them nor comfort them. Yet were they so comfortably taken by the hand and so goodly comforted, notwithstanding that fearful proclamation and the present threatenings of the sheriffs and serjeants, that the adversaries themselves were astonished." The crowd round the fire shouted "Amen" to the martyrs' prayers, and prayed with them that God would strengthen them. What galled Mary yet more was the ill will of the Pope. Paul the Fourth still adhered to his demand for full restoration of the Church lands, and held England as only partly reconciled to the Holy See. He was hostile to Philip; he was yet more hostile to Pole. At this

CHAP. II.
The Catholic Reaction.
1553-1558.

moment he dealt a last blow at the Queen by depriving Pole of his legatine power, and was believed to be on the point of calling him to answer a charge of heresy. Even when she was freed from part of her troubles in the autumn of 1558 by the opening of conferences for peace at Cambray a fresh danger disclosed itself. The demands of the Queen's envoys for the restoration of Calais met with so stubborn a refusal from France that it seemed as if England would be left alone to bear the brunt of a future struggle, for Mary's fierce pride, had she lived, could hardly have bowed to the surrender of the town. But the Queen was dying. Her health had long been weak, and the miseries and failure of her reign hastened the progress of disease. Already enfeebled, she was attacked as winter drew near by a fever which was at this time ravaging the country, and on the seventeenth of November, 1558, she breathed her last.

CHAPTER III.

THE ENGLAND OF ELIZABETH.

1558—1561.

Elizabeth's accession.

Tradition still points out the tree in Hatfield Park beneath which Elizabeth was sitting when she received the news of her peaceful accession to the throne. She fell on her knees, and drawing a long breath, exclaimed at last, "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." To the last these words remained stamped on the golden coinage of the Queen. The sense never left her that her preservation and her reign were the issues of a direct interposition of God. Daring and self-confident indeed as was her temper, it was awed into seriousness by the weight of responsibility which fell on her with her sister's death. Never had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb. Dragged at the heels of Philip into a useless and ruinous war, the country was left without an ally save Spain. The loss of Calais gave France the mastery of the Channel, and seemed to English eyes "to introduce the French King within the threshold of our house." "If God start not forth to the helm," wrote the Council in an appeal to the country, "we be at the point of greatest misery that can happen to any people, which is to become thrall to a foreign nation." The French King in fact, "bestrode the realm, having one foot in Calais and the other in Scotland." Ireland too was torn with civil war, while Scotland, always a danger in the north, had become formidable through the

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

French marriage of its Queen. In presence of enemies such as these, the country lay helpless, without army or fleet, or the means of manning one, for the treasury, already drained by the waste of Edward's reign, had been utterly exhausted by the restoration of the church-lands in possession of the Crown and by the cost of the war with France. But formidable as was the danger from without, it was little to the danger from within. The country was humiliated by defeat and brought to the verge of rebellion by the bloodshed and misgovernment of Mary's reign. The social discontent which had been trampled down for a while by the horsemen of Somerset remained a menace to further order. Above all, the religious strife had passed beyond hope of reconciliation now that the reformers were parted from their opponents by the fires of Smithfield and the party of the New Learning all but dissolved. The more earnest Catholics were bound helplessly to Rome. The temper of the Protestants, burned at home or driven into exile abroad, had become a fiercer thing, and the Calvinistic refugees were pouring back from Geneva with dreams of revolutionary changes in Church and State.

Her religious policy.

It was with the religious difficulty that Elizabeth was called first to deal, and the way in which she dealt with it showed at once the peculiar bent of her mind. The young Queen was not without a sense of religion; at moments of peril or deliverance throughout her reign her acknowledgements of a divine protection took a strange depth and earnestness But she was almost wholly destitute of spiritual emotion, or of any consciousness of the vast questions with which theology strove to deal. While the world around her was being swayed more and more by theological beliefs and controversies, Elizabeth was absolutely untouched by them. She was a child of the Italian Renascence rather than of the New Learning of Colet or Erasmus, and her attitude towards the enthusiasm of her time was that of Lorenzo de' Medici towards Savonarola. Her mind was untroubled

by the spiritual problems which were vexing the minds around her; to Elizabeth indeed they were not only unintelligible, they were a little ridiculous. She had been brought up under Henry amidst the ritual of the older Church; under Edward she had submitted to the English Prayer-book, and drunk in much of the Protestant theology; under Mary she was ready after a slight resistance to conform again to the mass. Her temper remained unchanged through the whole course of her reign. She showed the same intellectual contempt for the superstition of the Romanist as for the bigotry of the Protestant. While she ordered Catholic images to be flung into the fire, she quizzed the Puritans as "brethren in Christ." But she had no sort of religious aversion from either Puritan or Papist. The Protestants grumbled at the Catholic nobles whom she admitted to the presence. The Catholics grumbled at the Protestant statesmen whom she called to her council board. To Elizabeth on the other hand the arrangement was the most natural thing in the world. She looked at theological differences in a purely political light. She agreed with Henry the Fourth that a kingdom was well worth a mass. It seemed an obvious thing to her to hold out hopes of conversion as a means of deceiving Philip, or to gain a point in negotiation by restoring the crucifix to her chapel. The first interest in her own mind was the interest of public order, and she never could understand how it could fail to be the first in every one's mind.

CHAP. III.

The England of Elizabeth.

1558-1561.

Elizabeth's toleration.

One memorable change marked the nobler side of the policy she brought with her to the throne. Elizabeth's accession was at once followed by a close of the religious persecution. Whatever might be the changes that awaited the country, conformity was no longer to be enforced by the penalty of death. At a moment when Philip was presiding at *autos-de-fé* and Henry of France plotting a massacre of his Huguenot subjects, such a resolve was a gain for humanity as well as

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

a step towards religious toleration. And from this resolve Elizabeth never wavered. Through all her long reign, save a few Anabaptists whom the whole nation loathed as blasphemers of God and dreaded as enemies of social order, no heretic was "sent to the fire." It was a far greater gain for humanity when the Queen declared her will to meddle in no way with the consciences of her subjects. She would hear of no inquisition into a man's private thoughts on religious matters or into his personal religion. Cecil could boldly assert in her name at a later time the right of every Englishman to perfect liberty of religious opinion. Such a liberty of opinion by no means implied liberty of public worship. On the incompatibility of freedom of worship with public order Catholic and Protestant were as yet at one. The most advanced reformers did not dream of contending for a right to stand apart from the national religion. What they sought was to make the national religion their own. The tendency of the reformation had been to press for the religious as well as the political unity of every state. Even Calvin looked forward to the winning of the nations to a purer faith without a suspicion that the religious movement which he headed would end in establishing the right even of the children of "antichrist" to worship as they would in a Protestant commonwealth. If the Protestant lords in Scotland had been driven to assert a right of nonconformity, if the Huguenots of France were following their example, it was with no thought of asserting the right of every man to worship God as he would. From the claim of such a right Knox or Coligni would have shrunk with even greater horror than Elizabeth. What they aimed at was simply the establishment of a truce till by force or persuasion they could win the realms that tolerated them for their own. In this matter therefore Elizabeth was at one with every statesman of her day. While granting freedom of conscience to her subjects, she was resolute to exact an outward conformity to the established religion.

CHAP. III.

The England of Elizabeth.

1558-1561.

Religion unchanged.

But men watched curiously to see what religion the Queen would establish. Even before her accession the keen eye of the Spanish ambassador had noted her "great admiration for the king her father's mode of carrying on matters," as a matter of ill omen for the interests of Catholicism. He had marked that the ladies about her and the counsellors on whom she seemed about to rely were, like Cecil, "held to be heretics." "I fear much," he wrote, "that in religion she will not go right." As keen an instinct warned the Protestants that the tide had turned. The cessation of the burnings, and the release of all persons imprisoned for religion, seemed to receive their interpretation when Elizabeth on her entry into London kissed an English Bible which the citizens presented to her and promised "diligently to read therein." The exiles at Strassburg or Geneva flocked home with wild dreams of a religious revolution and of vengeance upon their foes. But hopes and fears alike met a startling check. For months there was little change in either government or religion. If Elizabeth introduced Cecil and his kinsman, Sir Nicholas Bacon, to her council board, she retained as yet most of her sister's advisers. The Mass went on as before, and the Queen was regular in her attendance at it As soon as the revival of Protestantism showed itself in controversial sermons and insults to the priesthood it was bridled by a proclamation which forbade unlicensed preaching and enforced silence on the religious controversy. Elizabeth showed indeed a distaste for the elevation of the Host, and allowed the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments to be used in English. But months passed after her accession before she would go further than this. A royal proclamation which ordered the existing form of worship to be observed "till consultation might be had in Parliament by the Queen and the Three Estates" startled the prelates; and only one bishop could be found to assist at the coronation of Elizabeth. But no change was made in the ceremonies of the corona-

CHAP. III. The Religion of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

tion; the Queen took the customary oath to observe the liberties of the Church, and conformed to the Catholic ritual. There was little in fact to excite any reasonable alarm among the adherents of the older faith, or any reasonable hope among the adherents of the new. "I will do," the Queen said, "as my father did." Instead of the reforms of Edward and the Protectorate, the Protestants saw themselves thrown back on the reforms of Henry the Eighth. Even Henry's system indeed seemed too extreme for Elizabeth. Her father had at any rate broken boldly from the Papacy. But the first work of the Queen was to open negotiations for her recognition with the Papal Court.

Elizabeth and Philip.

What shaped Elizabeth's course in fact was hard necessity. She found herself at war with France and Scotland, and her throne threatened by the claim of the girl who linked the two countries, the claim of Mary Stuart, at once Queen of Scotland and wife of the Dauphin Francis. On Elizabeth's accession Mary and Francis assumed by the French King's order the arms and style of English sovereigns: and if war continued it was clear that their pretensions would be backed by Henry's forces as well as by the efforts of the Scots. Against such a danger Philip of Spain was Elizabeth's only ally. Philip's policy was at this time a purely conservative one. The vast schemes of ambition which had so often knit both Pope and Protestants, Germany and France, against his father were set aside by the young King. His position indeed was very different from that of Charles the Fifth. He was not Emperor. He had little weight in Germany. Even in Italy his influence was less than his father's. He had lost with Mary's death the crown of England. His most valuable possessions outside Spain, the provinces of the Netherlands, were disaffected to a foreign rule. All the King therefore aimed at was to keep his own. But the Netherlands were hard to keep: and with France mistress of England as of Scotland, and so mistress

The England of Elizabeth.

1558-1561.

of the Channel, to keep them would be impossible. Sheer necessity forbade Philip to suffer the union of the three crowns of the west on the head of a French King; and the French marriage of Mary Stuart pledged him to oppose her pretensions and support Elizabeth's throne. For a moment he even dreamed of meeting the union of France and Scotland by that union of England with Spain which had been seen under Mary. He offered Elizabeth his hand. The match was a more natural one than Philip's union with her sister, for the young King's age was not far from her own. The offer however was courteously put aside, for Elizabeth had no purpose of lending England to the ambition of Spain, nor was it possible for her to repeat her sister's unpopular experiment. But Philip remained firm in his support of her throne. He secured for her the allegiance of the Catholics within her realm, who looked to him as their friend while they distrusted France as an ally of heretics His envoys supported her cause in the negotiations at Câteau Cambrésis; he suffered her to borrow money and provide herself with arms in his provinces of the Netherlands. At such a crisis Elizabeth could not afford to alienate Philip by changes which would roughly dispel his hopes of retaining her within the bounds of Catholicism.

Elizabeth and the Papacy.

Nor is there any sign that Elizabeth had resolved on a defiance of the Papacy. She was firm indeed to assert her father's claim of supremacy over the clergy and her own title to the throne. But the difficulties in the way of an accommodation on these points were such as could be settled by negotiation; and, acting on Cecil's counsel, Elizabeth announced her accession to the Pope. The announcement showed her purpose of making no violent break in the relations of England with the Papal See But between Elizabeth and the Papacy lay the fatal question of the Divorce. To acknowledge the young Queen was not only to own her mother's marriage, but to cancel the solemn judgement of the Holy See in Catharine's favour

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

and its solemn assertion of her own bastardy. The temper of Paul the Fourth took fire at the news. He reproached Elizabeth with her presumption in ascending the throne, recalled the Papal judgement which pronounced her illegitimate, and summoned her to submit her claims to his tribunal. Much of this indignation was no doubt merely diplomatic. If the Pope listened to the claims of Mary Stuart, which were urged on him by the French Court, it was probably only with the purpose of using them to bring pressure to bear on Elizabeth and on the stubborn country which still refused to restore its lands to the Church and to make the complete submission which Paul demanded. But Cecil and the Queen knew that, even had they been willing to pay such a price for the crown, it was beyond their power to bring England to pay it. The form too in which Paul had couched his answer admitted of no compromize. The summons to submit the Queen's claim of succession to the judgement of Rome produced its old effect. Elizabeth was driven, as Henry had been driven, to assert the right of the nation to decide on questions which affected its very life. A Parliament which met in January, 1559, acknowledged the legitimacy of Elizabeth and her title to the crown.

The Supremacy re-established.

Such an acknowledgement in the teeth of the Papal repudiation of Anne Boleyn's marriage carried with it a repudiation of the supremacy of the Papacy. It was in vain that the clergy in convocation unanimously adopted five articles which affirmed their faith in transubstantiation, their acceptance of the supreme authority of the Popes as "Christ's vicars and supreme rulers of the Church," and their resolve "that the authority in all matters of faith and discipline belongs and ought to belong only to the pastors of the Church, and not to laymen." It was in vain that the bishops unanimously opposed the Bill for restoring the royal supremacy when it was brought before the Lords. The "ancient jurisdiction of the Crown over the Estate ecclesiastical and spiritual" was restored; the Acts which

CHAP. III.

The England of Elizabeth.

1558–1561.

under Mary re-established the independent jurisdiction and legislation of the Church were repealed; and the clergy were called on to swear to the supremacy of the Crown and to abjure all foreign authority and jurisdiction. Further Elizabeth had no personal wish to go. A third of the Council and at least two-thirds of the people were as opposed to any radical changes in religion as the Queen. Among the gentry the older and wealthier were on the conservative side, and only the younger and meaner on the other. In the Parliament itself Sir Thomas White protested that "it was unjust that a religion begun in such a miraculous way and established by such grave men should be abolished by a set of beardless boys." Yet even this "beardless" parliament had shown a strong conservatism. The Bill which re-established the royal supremacy met with violent opposition in the Commons, and only passed through Cecil's adroit manœuvering.

Prayer-book restored.

But the steps which Elizabeth had taken made it necessary to go further. If the Protestants were the less numerous, they were the abler and the more vigorous party, and the break with Rome threw Elizabeth, whether she would or no, on their support. It was a support that could only be bought by theological concessions, and above all by the surrender of the Mass; for to every Protestant the Mass was identified with the fires of Smithfield, while the Prayer-book which it had displaced was hallowed by the memories of the Martyrs. The pressure of the reforming party indeed would have been fruitless had the Queen still been hampered by danger from France. Fortunately for their cause the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis at this juncture freed Elizabeth's hands. By this treaty, which was practically concluded in March, 1559, Calais was left in French holding on the illusory pledge of its restoration to England eight years later; but peace was secured and the danger of a war of succession, in which Mary Stuart would be backed by the arms of France, for a while averted. Secure from without, Elizabeth

CHAP. III.

The England of Elizabeth.

1558–1561.

could venture to buy the support of the Protestants within her realm by the restoration of the English Prayer-book. Such a measure was far indeed from being meant as an open break with Catholicism. The use of the vulgar tongue in public worship was still popular with a large part of the Catholic world; and the Queen did her best by the alterations she made in Edward's Prayer-book to strip it of its more Protestant tone. To the bulk of the people the book must have seemed merely a rendering of the old service in their own tongue. As the English Catholics afterwards represented at Rome when excusing their own use of it, the Prayer-book "contained neither impiety nor false doctrine; its prayers were those of the Catholic Church, altered only so far as to omit the merits and intercession of the saints." On such a concession as this the Queen felt it safe to venture in spite of the stubborn opposition of the spiritual estate. She ordered a disputation to be held in Westminster Abbey before the Houses on the question, and when the disputation ended in the refusal of the bishops to proceed an Act of Uniformity, which was passed in spite of their strenuous opposition, restored at the close of April the last Prayer-book of Edward, and enforced its use on the clergy on pain of deprivation.

Pius the Fourth.

At Rome the news of these changes stirred a fiercer wrath in Paul the Fourth, and his threats of excommunication were only held in check by the protests of Philip. The policy of the Spanish King still bound him to Elizabeth's cause, for the claims of Mary Stuart had been reserved in the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, and the refusal of France to abandon them held Spain to its alliance with the Queen. Vexed as he was at the news of the Acts which re-established the supremacy, Philip ordered his ambassador to assure Elizabeth he was as sure a friend as ever, and to soothe the resentment of the English Catholics if it threatened to break out into revolt. He showed the same temper in his protest against action at Rome. Paul

had however resolved to carry out his threats when his death and the interregnum which followed gave Elizabeth a fresh respite. His successor, Pius the Fourth, was of milder temper and leaned rather to a policy of conciliation. Decisive indeed as the Queen's action may seem in modern eyes, it was far from being held as decisive at the time. The Act of Supremacy might be regarded as having been forced upon Elizabeth by Paul's repudiation of her title to the crown. The alterations which were made by the Queen's authority in the Prayer-book showed a wish to conciliate those who clung to the older faith. It was clear that Elizabeth had no mind merely to restore the system of the Protectorate. She set up again the royal supremacy, but she dropped the words "Head of the Church" from the royal title. The forty-two Articles of Protestant doctrine which Cranmer had drawn up were left in abeyance. If the Queen had had her will, she would have retained the celibacy of the clergy and restored the use of crucifixes in the churches.

The Clergy and the oath.

The caution and hesitation with which she enforced on the clergy the oath required by the Act of Supremacy showed Elizabeth's wish to avoid the opening of a religious strife. The higher dignitaries indeed were unsparingly dealt with. The bishops, who with a single exception refused to take the oath, were imprisoned and deprived. The same measure was dealt out to most of the archdeacons and deans. But with the mass of the parish priests a very different course was taken. The Commissioners appointed in May 1559 were found to be too zealous in October, and several of the clerical members were replaced by cooler laymen. The great bulk of the clergy seem neither to have refused nor to have consented to the oath, but to have left the Commissioners' summons unheeded and to have stayed quietly at home. Of the nine thousand four hundred beneficed clergy only a tenth presented themselves before the Commissioners. Of those who attended and refused the oath a hundred and eighty-

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558–1561. nine were deprived, but many of the most prominent went unharmed. At Winchester, though the dean and canons of the cathedral, the warden and fellows of the college, and the master of St. Cross, refused the oath, only four of these appear in the list of deprivations. Even the few who suffered proved too many for the purpose of the Queen. In the more remote parts of the kingdom the proceedings of the visitors threatened to wake the religious strife which she was endeavouring to lull to sleep. On the northern border, where the great nobles, Lord Dacres and the Earls of Cumberland and Westmoreland, were zealous Catholics, and refused to let the bishop "meddle with them," the clergy held stubbornly aloof. At Durham a parson was able to protest without danger that the Pope alone had power in spiritual matters. In Hereford the town turned out to receive in triumph a party of priests from the west who had refused the oath. The University of Oxford took refuge in sullen opposition. In spite of pressure from the Protestant prelates, who occupied the sees vacated by the deprived bishops, Elizabeth was firm in her policy of patience, and in December she ordered the Commissioners in both provinces to suspend their proceedings.

The Religious Chaos. In part indeed of her effort she was foiled by the bitterness of the reformers. The London mob tore down the crosses in the streets. Her attempt to retain the crucifix, or to enforce the celibacy of the priesthood fell dead before the opposition of the Protestant clergy. But to the mass of the nation the compromise of Elizabeth seems to have been fairly acceptable. They saw but little change. Their old vicar or rector in almost every case remained in his parsonage and ministered in his church. The new Prayer-book was for the most part an English rendering of the old service. Even the more zealous adherents of Catholicism held as yet that in complying with the order for attendance at public worship "there could be nothing positively unlawful." Where party feeling ran

high indeed the matter was sometimes settled by a compromise. A priest would celebrate mass at his parsonage for the more rigid Catholics, and administer the new communion in church to the more rigid Protestants. Sometimes both parties knelt together at the same altar-rails, the one to receive hosts consecrated by the priest at home after the old usage, the other wafers consecrated in Church after the new. In many parishes of the north no change of service was made at all. Even where priest and people conformed it was often with a secret belief that better times were soon to bring back the older observances. As late as 1569 some of the chief parishes in Sussex were still merely bending to the storm of heresy. "In the church of Arundel certain altars do stand yet, to the offence of the godly, which murmur and speak much against the same. In the town of Battle when a preacher doth come and speak anything against the Pope's doctrine they will not abide but get them out of the church. They have yet in the diocese in many places thereof images hidden and other popish ornaments ready to set up the mass again within twenty-four hours warning. In many places they keep yet their chalices, looking to have mass again." Nor was there much new teaching as yet to stir up strife in those who clung to the older faith. Elizabeth had no mind for controversies which would set her people by the ears. "In many churches they have no sermons, not one in seven years, and some not one in twelve." The older priests of Mary's days held their peace. The Protestant preachers were few and hampered by the exaction of licences. In many cases churches had "neither parson, vicar, nor curate, but a sorry reader." Even where the new clergy were of higher intellectual stamp they were often unpopular. Many of those who were set in the place of the displaced clergy roused disgust by their violence and greed. Chapters plundered their own estates by leases and fines and by felling timber. The marriages of the clergy became a scandal, which was increased when

the gorgeous vestments of the old worship were cut up into gowns and boddices for the priests' wives. The new services sometimes turned into scenes of utter disorder where the ministers wore what dress they pleased and the communicant stood or sate as he liked; while the old altars were broken down and the communion-table was often a bare board upon trestles. Only in the few places where the more zealous of the reformers had settled was there any religious instruction. "In many places," it was reported after ten years of the Queen's rule, "the people cannot yet say their commandments, and in some not the articles of their belief. Naturally enough, the bulk of Englishmen were found to be "utterly devoid of religion," and came to church "as to a May game."

Parker. To modern eyes the Church under Elizabeth would seem little better than a religious chaos But England was fairly used to religious confusion, for the whole machinery of English religion had been thrown out of gear by the rapid and radical changes of the last two reigns. And to the Queen's mind a religious chaos was a far less difficulty than the parting of the nation into two warring Churches which would have been brought about by a more rigorous policy. She trusted to time to bring about greater order, and she found in Matthew Parker, whom Pole's death at the moment of her accession enabled her to raise to the see of Canterbury, an agent in the reorganization of the Church whose patience and moderation were akin to her own. To the difficulties which Parker found indeed in the temper of the reformers and their opponents new difficulties were sometimes added by the freaks of the Queen herself. If she had no convictions, she had tastes; and her taste revolted from the bareness of Protestant ritual and above all from the marriage of priests. "Leave that alone," she shouted to Dean Nowell from the royal closet as he denounced the use of images—"stick to your text, Master Dean, leave that alone!" When Parker was firm in resisting the

introduction of the crucifix or of celibacy, Elizabeth showed her resentment by an insult to his wife. Married ladies were addressed at this time as "Madam," unmarried ladies as "Mistress;" but the marriage of the clergy was still unsanctioned by law, for Elizabeth had refused to revive the statute of Edward by which it was allowed, and the position of a priest's wife was legally a very doubtful one. When Mrs. Parker therefore advanced at the close of a sumptuous entertainment at Lambeth to take leave of the Queen, Elizabeth feigned a momentary hesitation. "Madam," she said at last, "I may not call you, and Mistress I am loath to call you; however, I thank you for your good cheer." But freaks of this sort had little real weight beside the steady support which the Queen gave to the Primate in his work of order. The vacant sees were filled with men from among the exiles, for the most part learned and able, though far more Protestant than the bulk of their flocks; the plunder of the Church by the nobles was checked; and at the close of 1559 England seemed to settle quietly down in a religious peace.

Englan Protesta

But cautious as had been Elizabeth's movements and skilfully as she had hidden the real drift of her measures from the bulk of the people, the religion of England was changed. The old service was gone. The old bishops were gone. The royal supremacy was again restored. All connexion with Rome was again broken. The repudiation of the Papacy and the restoration of the Prayer-book in the teeth of the unanimous opposition of the priesthood had established the great principle of the Reformation, that the form of a nation's faith should be determined not by the clergy but by the nation itself. Different therefore as was the temper of the government, the religious attitude of England was once more what it had been under the Protectorate. At the most critical moment of the strife between the new religion and the old England had ranged itself on the side of Protestantism. It was only the later

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

history of Elizabeth's reign which was to reveal of what mighty import this Protestantism of England was to prove. Had England remained Catholic the freedom of the Dutch Republic would have been impossible. No Henry the Fourth would have reigned in France to save French Protestantism by the Edict of Nantes. No struggle over far-off seas would have broken the power of Spain and baffled the hopes which the House of Austria cherished of winning a mastery over the western world. Nor could Calvinism have found a home across the northern border. The first result of the religious change in England was to give a new impulse to the religious revolution in Scotland.

Scotch Calvinism.

In the midst of anxieties at home Elizabeth had been keenly watching the fortunes of the north. We have seen how the policy of Mary of Guise had given life and force to the Scottish Reformation. Not only had the Regent given shelter to the exiled Protestants and looked on at the diffusion of the new doctrines, but her "fair words" had raised hopes that the government itself would join the ranks of the reformers. Mary of Guise had regarded the religious movement in a purely political light. It was as enemies of Mary Tudor that she gave shelter to the exiles, and it was to avoid a national strife which would have left Scotland open to English attack in the war which closed Mary's reign that the Regent gave "fair words" to the preachers. But with the first Covenant, with the appearance of the Lords of the Congregation in an avowed league in the heart of the land, with their rejection of the state worship and their resolve to enforce a change of religion, her attitude suddenly altered. To the Regent the new religion was henceforth but a garb under which the old quarrel of the nobles was breaking out anew against the Crown. Smooth as were her words, men knew that Mary of Guise was resolute to withstand religious change. But Elizabeth's elevation to the throne gave a new fire to the reformers. Conservative as her earlier policy

seemed, the instinct of the Protestants told them that the new queen's accession was a triumph for Protestantism. The Lords at once demanded that all bishops should be chosen by the nobles and gentry, each priest by his parish, and that divine service should be henceforth in the vulgar tongue. These demands were rejected by the bishops, while the royal court in May 1559 summoned the preachers to its bar and on their refusal to appear condemned them to banishment as rebels. The sentence was a signal for open strife. The Protestants, whose strength as yet lay mainly in Fife, had gathered in great numbers at Perth, and the news stirred them to an outbreak of fury. The images were torn down from the churches, the monasteries of the town were sacked and demolished. The riot at Perth was followed by a general rising. The work of destruction went on along the east coast and through the Lowlands, while the "Congregation" sprang up everywhere in its train. The Mass came to an end. The Prayer-book of Edward was heard in the churches. The lords occupied the capital and found its burghers as zealous in the cause of reformation as themselves. Throughout all these movements the Lords had been in communication with England, for the old jealousy of English annexation was now lost in a jealousy of French conquest. Their jealousy had solid grounds. The marriage of Mary Stuart with the Dauphin of France had been celebrated in April 1558 and three days before the wedding the girl-queen had been brought to convey her kingdom away by deed to the House of Valois. The deed was kept secret; but Mary's demand of the crown matrimonial for her husband roused suspicions. It was known that the government of Scotland was discussed at the French council-board, and whispers came of a suggestion that the kingdom should be turned into an appanage for a younger son of the French King. Meanwhile French money was sent to the Regent, a body of French troops served as her body-guard, and on the advance of

CHAP. III.

The England of Elizabeth.

1558-1561.

Scotland and Elizabeth.

the Lords in arms the French Court promised her the support of a larger army.

Against these schemes of the French Court the Scotch Lords saw no aid save in Elizabeth. Their aim was to drive the Frenchmen out of Scotland; and this could only be done by help both in money and men from England. Nor was the English Council slow to promise help. To Elizabeth indeed the need of supporting rebels against their sovereign was a bitter one. The need of establishing a Calvinistic Church on her frontier was yet bitterer. It was not a national force which upheld the fabric of the monarchy, as it had been built up by the Houses of York and of Tudor, but a moral force. England held that safety against anarchy within and against attacks on the national independence from without was to be found in the Crown alone, and that obedience to the Crown was the first element of national order and national greatness. In their religious reforms the Tudor sovereigns had aimed at giving a religious sanction to the power which sprang from this general conviction, and at hallowing their secular supremacy by blending with it their supremacy over the Church. Against such a theory, either of Church or State, Calvinism was an emphatic protest, and in aiding Calvinism to establish itself in Scotland the Queen felt that she was dealing a heavy blow to her political and religious system at home. But struggle as she might against the necessity, she had no choice but to submit. The assumption by Francis and Mary of the style of King and Queen of England, the express reservation of this claim, even in the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, made a French occupation of Scotland a matter of life and death to the kingdom over the border. The English Council believed "that the French mean, after their forces are brought into Scotland, first to conquer it,—which will be neither hard nor long—and next that they and the Scots will invade this realm." They were soon pressed to decide on their course. The Regent used her money to

good purpose, and at the approach of her forces the Lords withdrew from Edinburgh to the west. At the end of August two thousand French soldiers landed at Leith, as the advance guard of the promised forces, and entrenched themselves strongly. It was in vain that the Lords again appeared in the field, demanded the withdrawal of the foreigners, and threatened Mary of Guise that as she would no longer hold them for her counsellors "we also will no longer acknowledge you as our Regent." They were ordered to disperse as traitors, beaten off from the fortifications of Leith, and attacked by the French troops in Fife itself.

Elizabeth's action.

The Lords called loudly for aid from the English Queen. To give such assistance would have seemed impossible but twelve months back. But the appeal of the Scots found a different England from that which had met Elizabeth on her accession. The Queen's diplomacy had gained her a year, and her matchless activity had used the year to good purpose. Order was restored throughout England, the Church was re-organized, the debts of the Crown were in part paid off, the treasury was recruited, a navy created, and a force made ready for action in the north. Neither religiously nor politically indeed had Elizabeth any sympathy with the Scotch Lords. Knox was to her simply a firebrand of rebellion; her political instinct shrank from the Scotch Calvinism with its protest against the whole English system of government, whether in Church or State; and as a Queen she hated revolt. But the danger forced her hand. Elizabeth was ready to act, and to act even in the defiance of France. As yet she stood almost alone in her self-reliance. Spain believed her ruin to be certain. Her challenge would bring war with France, and in a war with France the Spanish statesmen held that only their master's intervention could save her. "For our own sake," said one of Philip's ministers, "we must take as much care of England as of the Low Countries."

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

But that such a care would be needed Grenville never doubted; and Philip's councillors solemnly debated whether it might not be well to avoid the risk of a European struggle by landing the six thousand men whom Philip was now withdrawing from the Netherlands on the English shore, and coercing Elizabeth into quietness. France meanwhile despised her chances. Her very Council was in despair. The one minister in whom she dared to confide throughout these Scotch negotiations was Cecil, the youngest and boldest of her advisers, and even Cecil trembled for her success. The Duke of Norfolk refused at first to take command of the force destined as he held for a desperate enterprize. Arundel, the leading peer among the Catholics, denounced the supporters of a Scottish war as traitors. But lies and hesitation were no sooner put aside than the Queen's vigour and tenacity came fairly into play. In January, 1560, at a moment when D'Oysel, the French commander, was on the point of crushing the Lords of the Congregation, an English fleet appeared suddenly in the Forth and forced the Regent's army to fall back upon Leith.

The Huguenot rising.

Here however it again made an easy stand against the Protestant attacks, and at the close of February the Queen was driven to make a formal treaty with the Lords by which she promised to assist them in the expulsion of the strangers. The treaty was a bold defiance of the power from whom Elizabeth had been glad to buy peace only a year before, even by the sacrifice of Calais. But the Queen had little fear of a counter-blow from France. The Reformation was fighting for her on the one side of the sea as on the other From the outset of her reign the rapid growth of the Huguenots in France had been threatening a strife between the old religion and the new. It was to gird himself for such a struggle that Henry the Second concluded the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis; and though Henry's projects were foiled by his death, the Duke of Guise, who ruled his successor, Francis the Second,

pressed on yet more bitterly the work of persecution. It was believed that he had sworn to exterminate "those of the religion." But the Huguenots were in no mood to bear extermination. Their Protestantism, like that of the Scots, was the Protestantism of Calvin. As they grew in numbers, their churches formed themselves on the model of Geneva, and furnished in their synods and assemblies a political as well as a religious organization; while the doctrine of resistance even to kings, if kings showed themselves enemies to God, found ready hearers, whether among the turbulent French *noblesse*, or among the traders of the towns who were stirred to new dreams of constitutional freedom. Theories of liberty or of resistance to the crown were as abhorrent to Elizabeth as to the Guises, but again necessity swept her into the current of Calvinism. She was forced to seize on the religious disaffection of France as a check on the dreams of aggression which Francis and Mary had shown in assuming the style of English Sovereigns. The English ambassador, Throckmorton, fed the alarms of the Huguenots and pressed them to take up arms. It is probable that the Huguenot plot which broke out in the March of 1560 in an attempt to surprize the French Court at Amboise was known beforehand by Cecil; and, though the conspiracy was ruthlessly suppressed, the Queen drew fresh courage from a sense that the Guises had henceforth work for their troops at home.

Treaty of Edinburgh.

At the end of March therefore Lord Grey pushed over the border with 8,000 men to join the Lords of the Congregation in the siege of Leith. The Scots gave little aid; and an assault on the town signally failed. Philip too in a sudden jealousy of Elizabeth's growing strength demanded the abandonment of the enterprize, and offered to warrant England against any attack from the north if its forces were withdrawn. But eager as Elizabeth was to preserve Philip's alliance, she preferred to be her own security. She knew that the Spanish King could not

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

abandon her while Mary Stuart was Queen of France, and that at the moment of his remonstrances Philip was menacing the Guises with war if they carried out their project of bringing about a Catholic rising by a descent on the English coast. Nor were the threats of the French Court more formidable. The bloody repression of the conspiracy of Amboise had only fired the temper of the Huguenots; southern and western France were on the verge of revolt; the House of Bourbon had adopted the reformed faith, and put itself at the head of the Protestant movement In the face of dangers such as these the Guises could send to Leith neither money nor men. Elizabeth therefore remained immoveable while famine did its work on the town. At the crisis of the siege the death of Mary of Guise threw the direct rule over Scotland into the hands of Francis and Mary Stuart; and the exhaustion of the garrison forced the two sovereigns to purchase its liberation by two treaties which their envoys concluded at Edinburgh in June 1560 That with the Scotch pledged them to withdraw for ever the French from the realm, and left the government of Scotland to a Council of the Lords. The treaty with England was a more difficult matter. Francis and Mary had forbidden their envoys to sign any engagement with Elizabeth as to the Scottish realm, or to consent to any abandonment of their claims on the royal style of England. It was only after long debate that Cecil wrested from them the acknowledgement that the realms of England and Ireland of right appertained to Elizabeth, and a vague clause by which the French sovereigns promised the English Queen that they would fulfil their pledges to the Scots.

Elizabeth's character.

Stubborn however as was the resistance of the French envoys the signature of the treaty proclaimed Elizabeth's success. The issue of the Scotch war revealed suddenly to Europe the vigour of the Queen and the strength of her throne. What her ability really was no one, save Cecil, had as yet suspected. There was little indeed in

her outward demeanour to give any indication of her greatness. To the world about her the temper of Elizabeth recalled in its strange contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh, manlike voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger came to her with her Tudor blood. She rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Lord Essex with a box on the ear; she broke now and then into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. Strangely in contrast with these violent outlines of her father's temper stood the sensuous, self-indulgent nature she drew from Anne Boleyn. Splendour and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. Her delight was to move in perpetual progresses from castle to castle through a series of gorgeous pageants, fanciful and extravagant as a caliph's dream. She loved gaiety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favour. She hoarded jewels. Her dresses were innumerable. Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. She would play with her rings that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands, or dance a coranto that an ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests gave colour to a thousand scandals. Her character in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which broke out in the romps of her girlhood and showed itself almost ostentatiously through her later life. Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her "sweet Robin," Lord Leicester, in the face of the Court.

1558-1561. It was no wonder that the statesmen whom she outwitted held Elizabeth to be little more than a frivolous woman, or that Philip of Spain wondered how "a wanton" could hold in check the policy of the Escurial. But the Elizabeth whom they saw was far from being all of Elizabeth. Wilfulness and triviality played over the surface of a nature hard as steel, a temper purely intellectual, the very type of reason untouched by imagination or passion. Luxurious and pleasure-loving as she seemed, the young Queen lived simply and frugally, and she worked hard. Her vanity and caprice had no weight whatever with her in state affairs. The coquette of the presence-chamber became the coolest and hardest of politicians at the council-board Fresh from the flattery of her courtiers, she would tolerate no flattery in the closet; she was herself plain and downright of speech with her counsellors, and she looked for a corresponding plainness of speech in return The very choice of her advisers indeed showed Elizabeth's ability. She had a quick eye for merit of any sort, and a wonderful power of enlisting its whole energy in her service. The sagacity which chose Cecil and Walsingham was just as unerring in its choice of the meanest of her agents. Her success indeed in securing from the beginning of her reign to its end, with the single exception of Leicester, precisely the right men for the work she set them to do sprang in great measure from the noblest characteristic of her intellect. If in loftiness of aim the Queen's temper fell below many of the tempers of her time, in the breadth of its range, in the universality of its sympathy it stood far above them all. Elizabeth could talk poetry with Spenser and philosophy with Bruno; she could discuss Euphuism with Lilly, and enjoy the chivalry of Essex; she could turn from talk of the last fashions to pore with Cecil over despatches and

treasury books; she could pass from tracking traitors with Walsingham to settle points of doctrine with Parker, or to calculate with Frobisher the chances of a north-west passage to the Indies. The versatility and many-sidedness of her mind enabled her to understand every phase of the intellectual movement about her, and to fix by a sort of instinct on its higher representatives. CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

It was only on its intellectual side indeed that Elizabeth touched the England of her day. All its moral aspects were simply dead to her. It was a time when men were being lifted into nobleness by the new moral energy which seemed suddenly to pulse through the whole people, when honour and enthusiasm took colours of poetic beauty, and religion became a chivalry. But the finer sentiments of the men about her touched Elizabeth simply as the fair tints of a picture would have touched her. She made her market with equal indifference out of the heroism of William of Orange or the bigotry of Philip. The noblest aims and lives were only counters on her board. She was the one soul in her realm whom the news of St. Bartholomew stirred to no thirst for vengeance; and while England was thrilling with the triumph over the Armada, its Queen was coolly grumbling over the cost, and making her profit out of the spoiled provisions she had ordered for the fleet that saved her. No womanly sympathy bound her even to those who stood closest to her life. She loved Leicester indeed; she was grateful to Cecil. But for the most part she was deaf to the voices either of love or gratitude. She accepted such services as were never rendered to any other English sovereign without a thought of return. Walsingham spent his fortune in saving her life and her throne, and she left him to die a beggar. But, as if by a strange irony, it was to this very lack of womanly sympathy that she owed some of the grandest features of her character. If she was without love she was without hate. She cherished no petty resentments; she never stooped to envy or suspicion of the men

CHAP III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1601.

who served her. She was indifferent to abuse. Her good humour was never ruffled by the charges of wantonness and cruelty with which the Jesuits filled every Court in Europe. She was insensible to fear. Her life became at last a mark for assassin after assassin, but the thought of peril was the thought hardest to bring home to her. Even when Catholic plots broke out in her very household she would listen to no proposals for the removal of Catholics from her court.

If any trace of her sex lingered in the Queen's actual statesmanship, it was seen in the simplicity and tenacity of purpose that often underlies a woman's fluctuations of feeling. It was the directness and steadiness of her aims which gave her her marked superiority over the statesmen of her time. No nobler group of ministers ever gathered round a council-board than those who gathered round the council-board of Elizabeth. But she was the instrument of none She listened, she weighed, she used or put by the counsels of each in turn, but her policy as a whole was her own. It was a policy, not of genius, but of good sense. Her aims were simple and obvious: to preserve her throne, to keep England out of war, to restore civil and religious order. Something of womanly caution and timidity perhaps backed the passionless indifference with which she set aside the larger schemes of ambition which were ever opening before her eyes. In later days she was resolute in her refusal of the Low Countries. She rejected with a laugh the offers of the Protestants to make her "head of the religion" and "mistress of the seas." But her amazing success in the end sprang mainly from this wise limitation of her aims. She had a finer sense than any of her counsellors of her real resources; she knew instinctively how far she could go and what she could do. Her cold, critical intellect was never swayed by enthusiasm or by panic either to exaggerate or to under-estimate her risks or her power. Of political wisdom indeed in its larger and more generous sense

Elizabeth had little or none; but her political tact was unerring. She seldom saw her course at a glance, but she played with a hundred courses, fitfully and discursively, as a musician runs his fingers over the key-board, till she hit suddenly upon the right one. Her nature was essentially practical and of the present. She distrusted a plan in fact just in proportion to its speculative range or its outlook into the future. Her notion of statesmanship lay in watching how things turned out around her, and in seizing the moment for making the best of them.

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

Such a policy as this, limited, practical, tentative as it always was, had little of grandeur and originality about it; it was apt indeed to degenerate into mere trickery and finesse. But it was a policy suited to the England of her day, to its small resources and the transitional character of its religious and political belief, and it was eminently suited to Elizabeth's peculiar powers. It was a policy of detail, and in details her wonderful readiness and ingenuity found scope for their exercize. "No War, my Lords," the Queen used to cry imperiously at the council-board, "No War!" but her hatred of war sprang not so much from aversion to blood or to expense, real as was her aversion to both, as from the fact that peace left the field open to the diplomatic manœuvres and intrigues in which she excelled. Her delight in the consciousness of her ingenuity broke out in a thousand puckish freaks, freaks in which one can hardly see any purpose beyond the purpose of sheer mystification. She revelled in "bye-ways" and "crooked ways." She played with grave cabinets as a cat plays with a mouse, and with much of the same feline delight in the mere embarrassment of her victims. When she was weary of mystifying foreign statesmen she turned to find fresh sport in mystifying her own ministers. Had Elizabeth written the story of her reign she would have prided herself, not on the triumph of England or the ruin of Spain, but on the skill with which she had hoodwinked and outwitted every statesman in Europe during fifty years.

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

Nothing is more revolting, but nothing is more characteristic of the Queen than her shameless mendacity. It was an age of political lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom. A falsehood was to her simply an intellectual means of meeting a difficulty; and the ease with which she asserted or denied whatever suited her purpose was only equalled by the cynical indifference with which she met the exposure of her lies as soon as their purpose was answered. Her trickery in fact had its political value. Ignoble and wearisome as the Queen's diplomacy seems to us now, tracking it as we do through a thousand despatches, it succeeded in its main end, for it gained time, and every year that was gained doubled Elizabeth's strength. She made as dexterous a use of the foibles of her temper. Her levity carried her gaily over moments of detection and embarrassment where better women would have died of shame. She screened her tentative and hesitating statesmanship under the natural timidity and vacillation of her sex She turned her very luxury and sports to good account. There were moments of grave danger in her reign when the country remained indifferent to its perils, as it saw the Queen give her days to hawking and hunting, and her nights to dancing and plays. Her vanity and affectation, her womanly fickleness and caprice, all had their part in the diplomatic comedies she played with the successive candidates for her hand. If political necessities made her life a lonely one, she had at any rate the satisfaction of averting war and conspiracies by love sonnets and romantic interviews, or of gaining a year of tranquillity by the dexterous spinning out of a flirtation.

As we track Elizabeth through her tortuous mazes of lying and intrigue, the sense of her greatness is almost lost in a sense of contempt. But wrapped as they were in a cloud of mystery, the aims of her policy were throughout temperate and simple, and they were pursued with a rare tenacity. The sudden acts of energy which from

time to time broke her habitual hesitation proved that it was no hesitation of weakness. Elizabeth could wait and finesse; but when the hour was come she could strike, and strike hard. Her natural temper indeed tended to a rash self-confidence rather than to self-distrust. "I have the heart of a King," she cried at a moment of utter peril, and it was with a kingly unconsciousness of the dangers about her that she fronted them for fifty years. She had, as strong natures always have, an unbounded confidence in her luck. "Her Majesty counts much on Fortune," Walsingham wrote bitterly; "I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." The diplomatists who censured at one moment her irresolution, her delay, her changes of front, censure at the next her "obstinacy," her iron will, her defiance of what seemed to them inevitable ruin. "This woman," Philip's envoy wrote after a wasted remonstrance, "this woman is possessed by a hundred thousand devils." To her own subjects, who knew nothing of her manœuvres and flirtations, of her "bye-ways" and "crooked ways," she seemed the embodiment of dauntless resolution. Brave as they were, the men who swept the Spanish Main or glided between the icebergs of Baffin's Bay never doubted that the palm of bravery lay with their Queen.

Catharine of Medicis.

It was this dauntless courage which backed Elizabeth's good luck in the Scottish war. The issue of the war wholly changed her position at home and abroad. Not only had she liberated herself from the control of Philip and successfully defied the threats of the Guises, but at a single blow she had freed England from what had been its sorest danger for two hundred years. She had broken the dependence of Scotland upon France. That perpetual peace between England and the Scots which the policy of the Tudors had steadily aimed at was at last sworn in the Treaty of Edinburgh. If the Queen had not bound to her all Scotland, she had bound to her the strongest and most vigorous party among the nobles of the north. The Lords of the Congregation promised to be

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

obedient to Elizabeth in all such matters as might not lead to the overthrow of their country's rights or of Scottish liberties. They were bound to her not only by the war but by the events that followed the war. A Parliament at Edinburgh accepted the Calvinistic confession of Geneva as the religion of Scotland, abolished the temporal jurisdiction of the bishops, and prohibited the celebration of the Mass. The Act and the Treaty were alike presented for confirmation to Francis and Mary. They were roughly put aside, for the French King would give no sanction to a successful revolt, and Mary had no mind to waive her claim to the English throne. But from action the two sovereigns were held back by the troubles in France. It was in vain that the Guises strove to restore political and religious unity by an assembly of the French notables: the notables met only to receive a demand for freedom of worship from the Huguenots of the west, and to force the Government to promise a national council for the settlement of the religious disputes as well as a gathering of the States-General. The counsellors of Francis resolved to anticipate this meeting by a sudden stroke at the heretics; and as a preliminary step the chiefs of the House of Bourbon were seized at the court and the Prince of Condé threatened with death. The success of this measure roused anew the wrath of the young King at the demands of the Scots, and at the close of 1560 Francis was again nursing plans of vengeance on the Lords of the Congregation. But Elizabeth's good fortune still proved true to her The projects of the Guises were suddenly foiled by the young King's death. The power of Mary Stuart and her kindred came to an end, for the childhood of Charles the Ninth gave the regency over France to the Queen-mother, Catharine of Medicis, and the policy of Catharine secured England and Scotland alike from danger of attack. Her temper, like that of Elizabeth, was a purely political temper; her aim was to balance Catholics against Protestants to the

profit of the throne. She needed peace abroad to preserve this political and religious balance at home, and though she made some fruitless efforts to renew the old friendship with Scotland, she had no mind to intrigue like the Guises with the English Catholics nor to back Mary Stuart's pretensions to the English throne.

Philip's policy.

With Scotland as an ally and with France at peace Elizabeth's throne at last seemed secure. The outbreak of the strife between the Old Faith and the New indeed, if it gave the Queen safety abroad, somewhat weakened her at home. The sense of a religious change which her caution had done so much to disguise broke slowly on England as it saw the Queen allying herself with Scotch Calvinists and French Huguenots; and the compromise she had hoped to establish in matters of worship became hourly less possible as the more earnest Catholics discerned the Protestant drift of Elizabeth's policy. But Philip still held them back from any open resistance. There was much indeed to move him from his old support of the Queen. The widowhood of Mary Stuart freed him from his dread of a permanent annexation of Scotland by France as well as of a French annexation of England, while the need of holding England as a check on French hostility to the House of Austria grew weaker as the outbreak of civil war between the Guises and their opponents rendered French hostility less possible.* Elizabeth's support of the Huguenots drove the Spanish King to a burst of passion. A Protestant France not only outraged his religious bigotry, but, as he justly feared, it would give an impulse to heresy throughout his possessions in the Netherlands which would make it hard to keep his hold upon them. Philip noted that the success of the Scotch Calvinists had been followed by the revolt of the Calvinists in France. He could hardly doubt that the success of the French Huguenots would be followed by a rising of the Calvinists in the Low Countries. "Religion" he told Elizabeth angrily "was being made a cloak for anarchy

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

and revolution." But vexed as Philip was with her course both abroad and at home, he was still far from withdrawing his support from Elizabeth. Even now he could not look upon the Queen as lost to Catholicism. He knew how her course both at home and abroad had been forced on her not by religious enthusiasm but by political necessity, and he still "trusted that ere long God would give us either a general council or a good Pope who would correct abuses and then all would go well. That God would allow so noble and Christian a realm as England to break away from Christendom and run the risk of perdition he could not believe."

Pius the Fourth.

What was needed, Philip thought, was a change of policy in the Papacy. The bigotry of Paul the Fourth had driven England from the obedience of the Roman see. The gentler policy of Pius the Fourth might yet restore her to it. Pius was as averse from any break with Elizabeth as Philip was He censured bitterly the harshness of his predecessor. The loss of Scotland and the threatened loss of France he laid to the charge of the wars which Paul had stirred up against Philip and which had opened a way for the spread of Calvinism in both kingdoms. England, he held, could have been easily preserved for Catholicism but for Paul's rejection of the conciliatory efforts of Pole When he ascended the Papal throne at the end of 1559 indeed the accession of England to the Reformation seemed complete. The royal supremacy was re-established. the Mass abolished: the English Liturgy restored. A new episcopate, drawn from the Calvinistic refugees, was being gathered round Matthew Parker. But Pius would not despair. He saw no reason why England should not again be Catholic. He knew that the bulk of its people clung to the older religion, if they clung also to independence of the Papal jurisdiction and to the secularization of the Abbey-lands. The Queen, as he believed, had been ready for a compromise at her accession, and he was

ready to make terms with her now. In the spring of 1560 therefore he despatched Parpaglia, a follower of Pole, to open negotiations with Elizabeth. The moment which the Pope had chosen was a critical one for the Queen. She was in the midst of the Scotch war, and her forces had just been repulsed in an attempt to storm the walls of Leith. Such a repulse woke fears of conspiracy among the Catholic nobles of the northern border, and a refusal to receive the legate would have driven them to an open rising. On the other hand the reception of Parpaglia would have alienated the Protestants, shaken the trust of the Lords of the Congregation in the Queen's support, and driven them to make terms with Francis and Mary. In either case Scotland fell again under the rule of France, and the throne of Elizabeth was placed in greater peril than ever. So great was the Queen's embarrassment that she availed herself of Cecil's absence in the north to hold out hopes of the legate's admission to the realm and her own reconciliation with the Papacy. But she was freed from these difficulties by the resolute intervention of Philip. If he disapproved of her policy in Scotland he had no mind that Scotland should become wholly French or Elizabeth be really shaken on her throne. He ordered the legate therefore to be detained in Flanders till his threats had obtained from the Pope an order for his recall.

The Council of Trent.

But Pius was far from abandoning his hopes. After ten years suspension he had again summoned the Council of Trent. The cry for Church reform, the threat of national synods in Spain and in France, forced this measure on the Pope; and Pius availed himself of the assembly of the Council to make a fresh attempt to turn the tide of the Reformation and to win back the Protestant Churches to Catholicism. He called therefore on the Lutheran princes of Germany to send doctors to the Council, and in May 1561, eight months after Parpaglia's failure, despatched a fresh nuncio, Martinengo, to invite Elizabeth to send ambassadors to Trent. Philip pressed for the nuncio's admission to the

CHAP. III. The England of Elizabeth. 1558-1561.

realm. His hopes of the Queen's return to the faith were now being fed by a new marriage-negotiation; for on the withdrawal of the Archduke of Austria in sheer weariness of Elizabeth's treachery, she had encouraged her old play-fellow, Lord Robert Dudley, to hope for her hand and to amuse Philip by pledges of bringing back "the religion," should the help of the Spanish king enable him to win it. Philip gave his help, but Dudley remained a suitor, and the hopes of a Catholic revolution became fainter than ever. The Queen would suffer no landing of a legate in her realm. The invitation to the Council fared no better. The Lutheran states of North Germany had already refused to attend. The Council, they held, was no longer a council of reunion. In its earlier session it had formally condemned the very doctrine on which Protestantism was based; and to join it now would simply be to undo all that Luther had done. Elizabeth showed as little hesitation. The hour of her triumph, when a Calvinistic Scotland and a Calvinistic France proved the mainstays of her policy, was no hour of submission to the Papacy. In spite of Philip's entreaties she refused to send envoys to what was not "a free Christian Council." The refusal was decisive in marking Elizabeth's position. The long period of hesitation, of drift, was over. All chance of submission to the Papacy was at an end. In joining the Lutheran states in their rejection of this Council, England had definitely ranged itself on the side of the Reformation.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND AND MARY STUART.

1561—1567.

The English Catholics.

WHAT had hitherto kept the bulk of Elizabeth's subjects from opposition to her religious system was a disbelief in its permanence. Englishmen had seen English religion changed too often to believe that it would change no more. When the Commissioners forced a Protestant ritual on St. John's College at Oxford, its founder, Sir Thomas White, simply took away its vestments and crucifixes, and hid them in his house for the better times that every zealous Catholic trusted would have their turn. They believed that a Catholic marriage would at once bring such a turn about; and if Elizabeth dismissed the offer of Philip's hand she played long and assiduously with that of a son of the Emperor, an archduke of the same Austrian house. But the alliance with the Scotch heretics proved a rough blow to this trust: and after the repulse at Leith there were whispers that the two great Catholic nobles of the border, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, were only waiting for the failure of the Scotch enterprize to rise on behalf of the older faith. Whatever their projects were, they were crushed by the Queen's success. With the Lords of the Congregation masters across the border the northern Earls lay helpless between the two Protestant realms. In the mass of men loyalty was still too strong for any dream of revolt; but there was

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

a growing uneasiness lest they should find themselves heretics after all, which the failure of the Austrian match and the help given to the Huguenots was fanning into active discontent. It was this which gave such weight to the Queen's rejection of the summons to Trent. Whatever colour she might strive to put upon it, the bulk of her subjects accepted the refusal as a final break with Catholicism, as a final close to all hope of their reunion with the Catholic Church.

Mary Stuart.

The Catholic disaffection which the Queen was henceforth to regard as her greatest danger was thus growing into life when in August 1561, but a few months after the Queen's refusal to acknowledge the Council, Mary Stuart landed at Leith. Girl as she was, and she was only nineteen, Mary was hardly inferior in intellectual power to Elizabeth herself, while in fire and grace and brilliancy of temper she stood high above her. She brought with her the voluptuous refinement of the French Renascence; she would lounge for days in bed, and rise only at night for dances and music. But her frame was of iron, and incapable of fatigue; she galloped ninety miles after her last defeat without a pause save to change horses. She loved risk and adventure and the ring of arms; as she rode in a foray to the north the swordsmen beside her heard her wish she was a man "to know what life it was to lie all night in the fields, or to walk on the cawsey with a jack and knapschalle, a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword." But in the closet she was as cool and astute a politician as Elizabeth herself; with plans as subtle, and of a far wider and bolder range than the Queen's. "Whatever policy is in all the chief and best practised heads of France," wrote an English envoy, "whatever craft, falsehood, and deceit is in all the subtle brains of Scotland, is either fresh in this woman's memory, or she can fetch it out with a wet finger." Her beauty, her exquisite grace of manner, her generosity of temper and warmth of affection,

her frankness of speech, her sensibility, her gaiety, her womanly tears, her manlike courage, the play and freedom of her nature, the flashes of poetry that broke from her at every intense moment of her life, flung a spell over friend or foe which has only deepened with the lapse of years. Even to Knollys, the sternest Puritan of his day, she seemed in her later captivity to be "a notable woman." "She seemeth to regard no ceremonious honour besides the acknowledgement of her estate royal. She showeth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, to be very familiar. She showeth a great desire to be avenged on her enemies. She showeth a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory. She desireth much to hear of hardiness and valiancy, commending by name all approved hardy men of her country though they be her enemies, and she concealeth no cowardice even in her friends."

Mary's plans.

Of the stern bigotry, the intensity of passion, which lay beneath the winning surface of Mary's womanhood, men as yet knew nothing. But they at once recognized her political ability. Till now she had proved in her own despite a powerful friend to the Reformation. It was her claim of the English crown which had seated Elizabeth on the throne, had thrown her on the support of the Protestants, and had secured to the Queen in the midst of her religious changes the protection of Philip of Spain. It was the dread of Mary's ambition which had forced Elizabeth to back the Lords of the Congregation, and the dread of her husband's ambition which had driven Scotland to throw aside its jealousy of England and ally itself with the Queen. But with the death of Francis Mary's position had wholly changed. She had no longer the means of carrying out her husband's threats of crushing the Lords of the Congregation by force of arms. The forces of France were in the hands of Catharine of Medicis; and Catharine was parted from her both by her dread of the Guises and by a personal hate. Yet the attitude of the

CHAP. IV. — England and Mary Stuart. — 1561-1567. —

lords became every day more threatening. They were pressing Elizabeth to marry the Earl of Arran, a chief of the house of Hamilton and near heir to the throne, a marriage which pointed to the complete exclusion of Mary from her realm. Even when this project failed, they rejected with stern defiance the young Queen's proposal of restoring the old religion as a condition of her return. If they invited her to Scotland, it was in the name of the Parliament which had set up Calvinism as the law of the land. Bitter as such terms must have been Mary had no choice but to submit to them To accept the offer of the Catholic lords of Northern Scotland with the Earl of Huntly at their head, who proposed to welcome her in arms as a champion of Catholicism, was to risk a desperate civil war, a war which would in any case defeat a project far dearer to her than her plans for winning Scotland, the project she was nursing of winning the English realm In the first months of her widowhood therefore her whole attitude was reversed. She received the leader of the Protestant Lords, her half brother, Lord James Stuart, at her court. She showed her favour to him by creating him Earl of Murray. She adopted his policy of accepting the religious changes in Scotland and of bringing Elizabeth by friendly pressure to acknowledge her right, not of reigning in her stead, but of following her on the throne. But while thus in form adopting Murray's policy, Mary at heart was resolute to carry out her own policy too. If she must win the Scots by submitting to a Protestant system in Scotland, she would rally round her the English Catholics by remaining a Catholic herself. If she ceased to call herself Queen of England and only pressed for her acknowledgement as rightful successor to Elizabeth, she would not formally abandon her claim to reign as rightful Queen in Elizabeth's stead. Above all she would give her compliance with Murray's counsels no legal air. No pressure either from her brother or from Elizabeth could bring the young Queen to give her royal confirmation to the

England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

Parliamentary Acts which established the new religion in Scotland, or her signature to the Treaty of Edinburgh. In spite of her habitual caution the bold words which broke from Mary Stuart on Elizabeth's refusal of a safe conduct betrayed her hopes. "I came to France in spite of her brother's opposition," she said, "and I will return in spite of her own. She has combined with rebel subjects of mine: but there are rebel subjects in England too who would gladly listen to a call from me. I am a queen as well as she, and not altogether friendless. And perhaps I have as great a soul too!"

Her toleration.

She saw indeed the new strength which was given her by her husband's death. Her cause was no longer hampered, either in Scotland or in England, by a national jealousy of French interference. It was with a resolve to break the league between Elizabeth and the Scotch Protestants, to unite her own realm around her, and thus to give a firm base for her intrigues among the English Catholics, that Mary Stuart landed at Leith. The effect of her presence was marvellous. Her personal fascination revived the national loyalty, and swept all Scotland to her feet. Knox, the greatest and sternest of the Calvinistic preachers, alone withstood her spell. The rough Scotch nobles owned that there was in Mary "some enchantment whereby men are bewitched." It was clear indeed from the first that, loyal as Scotland might be, its loyalty would be of little service to the Queen if she attacked the new religion. At her entry into Edinburgh the children of the pageant presented her with a Bible and "made some speech concerning the putting away of the Mass, and thereafter sang a psalm." It was only with difficulty that Murray won for her the right of celebrating Mass at her court. But for the religious difficulty Mary was prepared. While steadily abstaining from any legal confirmation of the new faith, and claiming for her French followers freedom of Catholic worship, she denounced any attempt to meddle with the form of religion

CHAP. IV. — England and Mary Stuart. — 1561-1567. — she found existing in the realm. Such a toleration was little likely to satisfy the more fanatical among the ministers; but even Knox was content with her promise "to hear the preaching," and brought his brethren to a conclusion, as "she might be won," "to suffer her for a time." If the preachers indeed maintained that the Queen's liberty of worship "should be their thraldom," the bulk of the nation was content with Mary's acceptance of the religious state of the realm. Nor was it distasteful to the secular leaders of the reforming party. The Protestant Lords preferred their imperfect work to the more complete reformation which Knox and his fellows called for. They had no mind to adopt the whole Calvinistic system. They had adopted the Genevan Confession of Faith; but they rejected a book of discipline which would have organized the Church on the Huguenot model. All demands for restitution of the church property which they were pillaging they set aside as a "fond imagination." The new ministers remained poor and dependent, while noble after noble was hanging an abbot to seize his estates in forfeiture, or roasting a commendator to wring from him a grant of abbey-lands in fee.

Mary and Elizabeth. The attitude of the Lords favoured the Queen's designs. She was in effect bartering her toleration of their religion in exchange for her reception in Scotland and for their support of her claim to be named Elizabeth's successor. With Mary's landing at Leith the position of the English Queen had suddenly changed. Her work seemed utterly undone. The national unity for which she was struggling was broken The presence of Mary woke the party of the old faith to fresh hopes and a fresh activity, while it roused a fresh fear and fanaticism in the party of the new. Scotland, where Elizabeth's influence had seemed supreme, was struck from her hands. Not only was it no longer a support; it was again a danger. Loyalty, national pride, a just and statesmanlike longing for union with England, united her northern subjects round the Scottish Queen in

her claim to be recognized as Elizabeth's successor.' Even Murray counted on Elizabeth's consent to this claim to bring Mary into full harmony with his policy, and to preserve the alliance between England and Scotland. But the question of the succession, like the question of her marriage, was with Elizabeth a question of life and death. Her wedding with a Catholic or a Protestant suitor would have been equally the end of her system of balance and national union, a signal for the revolt of the party which she disappointed and for the triumphant dictation of the party which she satisfied. "If a Catholic prince come here," wrote a Spanish ambassador while pressing her marriage with an Austrian archduke, "the first Mass he attends will be the signal for a revolt." It was so with the question of the succession. To name a Protestant successor from the House of Suffolk would have driven every Catholic to insurrection. To name Mary was to stir Protestantism to a rising of despair, and to leave Elizabeth at the mercy of every fanatical assassin who wished to clear the way for a Catholic ruler. Yet to leave both unrecognized was to secure the hostility of both, as well as the discontent of the people at large, who looked on the settlement of the succession as the primary need of their national life. From the moment of Mary's landing therefore Elizabeth found herself thrown again on an attitude of self-defence. Every course of direct action was closed to her. She could satisfy neither Protestant nor Catholic, neither Scotland nor England. Her work could only be a work of patience; the one possible policy was to wait, to meet dangers as they rose, to watch for possible errors in her rival's course, above all by diplomacy, by finesse, by equivocation, by delay, to gain time till the dark sky cleared.

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

Mary's succession.

Nothing better proves Elizabeth's political ability than the patience, the tenacity, with which for the six years that followed she played this waiting game. She played it utterly alone. Even Cecil at moments of peril called

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

for a policy of action. But his counsels never moved the Queen. Her restless ingenuity vibrated ceaselessly, like the needle of a compass, from one point to another, now stirring hopes in Catholic, now in Protestant, now quivering towards Mary's friendship, then as suddenly trembling off to incur her hate. But tremble and vibrate as it might, Elizabeth's purpose returned ever to the same unchanging point. It was in vain that Mary made a show of friendship, and negotiated for a meeting at York, where the question of the succession might be settled. It was in vain that to prove her lack of Catholic fanaticism she even backed Murray in crushing the Earl of Huntly, the foremost of her Catholic nobles, or that she held out hopes to the English envoy of her conformity to the faith of the Church of England. It was to no purpose that, to meet the Queen's dread of her marriage with a Catholic prince when her succession was once acknowledged, a marriage which would in such a case have shaken Elizabeth on her throne, Mary listened even to a proposal for a match with Lord Leicester, and that Murray supported such a step, if Elizabeth would recognize Mary as her heir. Elizabeth promised that she would do nothing to impair Mary's rights; but she would do nothing to own them. "I am not so foolish," she replied with bitter irony to Mary's entreaties, "I am not so foolish as to hang a winding-sheet before my eyes." That such a refusal was wise time was to show. But even then it is probable that Mary's intrigues were not wholly hidden from the English Queen. Elizabeth's lying paled indeed before the cool duplicity of this girl of nineteen. While she was befriending Protestantism in her realm, and holding out hopes of her mounting the English throne as a Protestant Queen, Mary Stuart was pledging herself to the Pope to restore Catholicism on either side the border, and pressing Philip to aid her in this holy work by giving her the hand of his son Don Carlos. It was with this design that she was fooling the Scotch Lords

and deceiving Murray: it was with this end that she strove in vain to fool Elizabeth and Knox.

CHAP. I — England and Mary Stuart — 1561-1567 — France and the Reformation.

But pierce through the web of lying as she might, the pressure on the English Queen became greater every day. What had given Elizabeth security was the adhesion of the Scotch Protestants and the growing strength of the Huguenots in France. But the firm government of Murray and her own steady abstinence from any meddling with the national religion was giving Mary a hold upon Scotland which drew Protestant after Protestant to her side; while the tide of French Calvinism was suddenly rolled back by the rise of a Catholic party under the leadership of the Guises. Under Catharine of Medicis France had seemed to be slowly drifting to the side of Protestantism. While the Queen-mother strove to preserve a religious truce the attitude of the Huguenots was that of men sure of success. Their head, the King of Navarre, boasted that before the year was out he would have the Gospel preached throughout the realm, and his confidence seemed justified by the rapid advance of the new opinions. They were popular among the merchant class. The *noblesse* was fast becoming Huguenot. At the court itself the nobles feasted ostentatiously on the fast days of the Church and flocked to the Protestant preachings. The clergy themselves seemed shaken. Bishops openly abjured the older faith. Coligni's brother, the Cardinal of Chatillon, celebrated the communion instead of mass in his own episcopal church at Beauvais, and married a wife. So irresistible was the movement that Catharine saw no way of preserving France to Catholicism but by the largest concessions; and in the summer of 1561 she called on the Pope to allow the removal of images, the administration of the sacrament in both kinds, and the abolition of private masses. Her demands were outstripped by those of an assembly of deputies from the states which met at Pontoise. These called for the confiscation of Church property, for freedom of conscience and of worship, and

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

above all for a national Council in which every question should be decided by "the Word of God." France seemed on the verge of becoming Protestant; and at a moment when Protestantism had won England and Scotland, and appeared to be fast winning southern as well as northern Germany, the accession of France would have determined the triumph of the Reformation. The importance of its attitude was seen in its effect on the Papacy It was the call of France for a national Council that drove Rome once more to summon the Council of Trent. It was seen too in the policy of Mary Stuart. With France tending to Calvinism it was no time for meddling with the Calvinism of Scotland; and Mary rivalled Catharine herself in her pledges of toleration. It was seen above all in the anxiety of Philip of Spain. To preserve the Netherlands was still the main aim of Philip's policy, and with France as well as England Protestant, a revolt of the Netherlands against the cruelties of the Inquisition became inevitable By appeals therefore to religious passion, by direct pledges of aid, the Spanish King strove to rally the party of the Guises against the system of Catharine.

The Civil War.

But Philip's intrigues were hardly needed to rouse the French Catholics to arms. If the Guises had withdrawn from court it was only to organize resistance to the Huguenots. They were aided by the violence of their opponents The Huguenot lords believed themselves irresistible; they boasted that the churches numbered more than three hundred thousand men fit to bear arms. But the mass of the nation was hardly touched by the new Gospel; and the Guises stirred busily the fanaticism of the poor. The failure of a conference between the advocates of either faith was the signal for a civil war in the south. Catharine strove in vain to allay the strife at the opening of 1562 by an edict of pacification; Guise struck his counter-blow by massacring a Protestant congregation at Vassy, by entering Paris with two thousand

men, and by seizing the Regent and the King. Condé and Coligni at once took up arms; and the fanaticism of the Huguenots broke out in a terrible work of destruction which rivalled that of the Scots. All Western France, half Southern France, the provinces along the Loire and the Rhone, rose for the Gospel. Only Paris and the north of France held firmly to Catholicism. But the plans of the Guises had been ably laid. The Huguenots found themselves girt in by a ring of foes. Philip sent a body of Spaniards into Gascony, Italians and Piedmontese in the pay of the Pope and the Duke of Savoy marched upon the Rhone. Seven thousand German mercenaries appeared in the camp of the Guises. Panic ran through the Huguenot forces; they broke up as rapidly as they had gathered; and resistance was soon only to be found in Normandy and in the mountains of the Cevennes.

Elizabeth and the Huguenots.

Condé appealed for aid to the German princes and to England: and grudge as she might the danger and cost of such a struggle, Elizabeth saw that her aid must be given. She knew that the battle with her opponent had to be fought abroad rather than at home. The Guises were Mary's uncles; and their triumph meant trouble in Scotland and worse trouble in England. In September therefore she concluded a treaty with the Huguenots at Hampton Court, and promised to supply them with six thousand men and a hundred thousand crowns. The bargain she drove was a hard one. She knew that the French had no purpose of fulfilling their pledge to restore Calais, and she exacted the surrender of Havre into her hands as a security for its restoration. Her aid came almost too late. The Guises saw the need of securing Normandy if English intervention was to be hindered, and a vigorous attack brought about the submission of the province. But the Huguenots were now reinforced by troops from the German princes; and at the close of 1562 the two armies met on the field of Dreux. The strife had already widened into a general war of religion. It was the fight, not of French

CHAP. IV. — England and Mary Stuart. — 1561-1567.

factions, but of Protestantism and Catholicism, that was to be fought out on the fields of France. The two warring elements of Protestantism were represented in the Huguenot camp where German Lutherans stood side by side with the French Calvinists. On the other hand the French Catholics were backed by soldiers from the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, from the Catholic states of Germany, from Catholic Italy, and from Catholic Spain. The encounter was a desperate one, but it ended in a virtual triumph for the Guises. While the German troops of Coligni clung to the Norman coast in the hope of subsidies from Elizabeth, the Duke of Guise was able to march at the opening of 1563 on the Loire, and form the siege of Orleans.

Mary and Protestantism.

In Scotland Mary Stuart was watching her uncle's progress with ever-growing hope. The policy of Murray had failed in the end to which she mainly looked. Her acceptance of the new religion, her submission to the Lords of the Congregation, had secured her a welcome in Scotland and gathered the Scotch people round her standard. But it had done nothing for her on the other side of the border Two years had gone by, and any recognition of her right of succession to the English crown seemed as far off as ever. But Murray's policy was far from being Mary's only resource. She had never surrendered herself in more than outer show to her brother's schemes. In heart she had never ceased to be a bigoted Catholic, resolute for the suppression of Protestantism as soon as her toleration of it had given her strength enough for the work. It was this that made the strife between the two Queens of such terrible moment for English freedom. Elizabeth was fighting for more than personal ends. She was fighting for more than her own occupation of the English throne. Consciously or unconsciously she was struggling to avert from England the rule of a Queen who would have undone the whole religious work of the past half-century, who would have swept England back into the tide of Catholicism, and who in doing this would

have blighted and crippled its national energies at the very moment of their mightiest developement. It was the presence of such a danger that sharpened the eyes of Protestants on both sides the border. However she might tolerate the reformed religion or hold out hopes of her compliance with a reformed worship, no earnest Protestant either in England or in Scotland could bring himself to see other than an enemy in the Scottish Queen. Within a few months of her arrival the cool eye of Knox had pierced through the veil of Mary's dissimulation. "The Queen," he wrote to Cecil, "neither is nor shall be of our opinion." Her steady refusal to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh or to confirm the statutes on which the Protestantism of Scotland rested was of far greater significance than her support of Murray or her honeyed messages to Elizabeth. While the young Queen looked coolly on at the ruin of the Catholic house of Huntly, at the persecution of Catholic recusants, at so strict an enforcement of the new worship that "none within the realm durst more avow the hearing or saying of Mass than the thieves of Liddesdale durst avow their stealth in presence of an upright judge," she was in secret correspondence with the Guises and the Pope. Her eye was fixed upon France. While Catharine of Medicis was all powerful, while her edict secured toleration for the Huguenots on one side of the sea, Mary knew that it was impossible to refuse toleration on the other. But with the first movement of the Duke of Guise fiercer hopes revived. Knox was "assured that the Queen danced till after midnight because that she had received letters that persecution was begun in France, and that her uncles were beginning to stir their tail, and to trouble the whole realm of France." Whether she gave such open proof of her joy or no, Mary woke to a new energy at the news of Guise's success. She wrote to Pope Pius to express her regret that the heresy of her realm prevented her sending envoys to the Council of Trent. She assured the Cardinal of Lorraine

CHAP. IV.

England and Mary Stuart.

1561-1567.

that she would restore Catholicism in her dominions, even at the peril of her life. She pressed on Philip of Spain a proposal for her marriage with his son, Don Carlos, as a match which would make her strong enough to restore Scotland to the Church.

The Papal Brief.

The echo of the French conflict was felt in England as in the north. The English Protestants saw in it the approach of a struggle for life and death at home. The English Queen saw in it a danger to her throne. So great was Elizabeth's terror at the victory of Dreux that she resolved to open her purse-strings and to hire fresh troops for the Huguenots in Germany. But her dangers grew at home as abroad. The victory of Guise dealt the first heavy blow at her system of religious conformity. Rome had abandoned its dreams of conciliation on her refusal to own the Council of Trent, and though Philip's entreaties brought Pius to suspend the issue of a Bull of Deposition, the Papacy opened the struggle by issuing in August 1562 a brief which pronounced joining in the Common Prayer schismatic and forbade the attendance of Catholics at church. On no point was Elizabeth so sensitive, for on no point had her policy seemed so successful. Till now, whatever might be their fidelity to the older faith, few Englishmen had carried their opposition to the Queen's changes so far as to withdraw from religious communion with those who submitted to them. But with the issue of the brief this unbroken conformity came to an end. A few of the hotter Catholics withdrew from church. Heavy fines were laid on them as recusants; fines which, as their numbers increased, became a valuable source of supply for the royal exchequer. But no fines could compensate for the moral blow which their withdrawal dealt. It was the beginning of a struggle which Elizabeth had averted through three memorable years. Protestant fanaticism met Catholic fanaticism, and as news of the massacre at Vassy spread through England the Protestant preachers called for the death of

"Papists." The tidings of Dreux spread panic through the realm. The Parliament which met again in January 1563 showed its terror by measures of a new severity. There had been enough of words, cried one of the Queen's ministers, Sir Francis Knollys, "it was time to draw the sword."

CHAP. IV.
England and Mary Stuart.
1561-1567.

The Test Act.

The sword was drawn in the first of a series of penal statutes which weighed upon English Catholics for two hundred years. By this statute an oath of allegiance to the Queen and of abjuration of the temporal authority of the Pope was exacted from all holders of office, lay or spiritual, within the realm, with the exception of peers. Its effect was to place the whole power of the realm in the hands either of Protestants or of Catholics who accepted Elizabeth's legitimacy and her ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the teeth of the Papacy. The oath of supremacy was already exacted from every clergyman and every member of the universities. But the obligation of taking it was now widely extended. Every member of the House of Commons, every officer in the army or the fleet, every schoolmaster and private tutor, every justice of the peace, every municipal magistrate, to whom the oath was tendered, was pledged from this moment to resist the blows which Rome was threatening to deal. Extreme caution indeed was used in applying this test to the laity, but pressure was more roughly put on the clergy. A great part of the parish priests, though they had submitted to the use of the Prayer-book, had absented themselves when called on to take the oath prescribed by the Act of Uniformity, and were known to be Catholics in heart. As yet Elizabeth had cautiously refused to allow any strict enquiry into their opinions. But a commission was now opened by her order at Lambeth, to enforce the Act of Uniformity in public worship; while thirty-nine of the Articles of Faith drawn up under Edward the Sixth, which had till now been left in suspense by her Government, were adopted in Convocation as a standard of faith, and acceptance of them demanded from all the clergy.

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567. *Mary and Knox.*

With the Test Act and the establishment of the High Commission the system which the Queen had till now pursued in great measure ceased. Elizabeth had "drawn the sword." It is possible she might still have clung to her older policy had she foreseen how suddenly the danger which appalled her was to pass away. At this crisis, as ever, she was able to "count on Fortune." The Test Act was hardly passed when in February 1563 the Duke of Guise was assassinated by a Protestant zealot, and with his murder the whole face of affairs was changed. The Catholic army was paralyzed by its leader's loss, while Coligni, who was now strengthened with money and forces from England, became master of Normandy. The war however came quietly to an end; for Catharine of Medicis regained her power on the Duke's death, and her aim was still an aim of peace. A treaty with the Huguenots was concluded in March, and a new edict of Amboise restored the truce of religion. Elizabeth's luck indeed was chequered by a merited humiliation. Now that peace was restored Huguenot and Catholic united to demand the surrender of Tours; and an outbreak of plague among its garrison compelled the town to capitulate. The new strife in which England thus found itself involved with the whole realm of France moved fresh hopes in Mary Stuart. Mary had anxiously watched her uncle's progress, for his success would have given her the aid of a Catholic France in her projects on either side of the border. But even his defeat failed utterly to dishearten her The war between the two Queens which followed it might well force Catharine of Medicis to seek Scottish aid against England, and the Scottish Queen would thus have secured that alliance with a great power which the English Catholics demanded before they would rise at her call. At home troubles were gathering fast around her. Veil her hopes as she might, the anxiety with which she had followed the struggle of her kindred had not been lost on the Protestant leaders, and it is probable that

Knox at any rate had learned something of her secret correspondence with the Pope and the Guises. The Scotch Calvinists were stirred by the peril of their brethren in France, and the zeal of the preachers was roused by a revival of the old worship in Clydesdale and by the neglect of the Government to suppress it. In the opening of 1563 they resolved "to put to their own hands," and without further plaint to Queen or Council to carry out "the punishment that God had appointed to idolaters in his law." In Mary's eyes such a resolve was rebellion. But her remonstrances only drew a more formal doctrine of resistance from Knox. "The sword of justice, madam, is God's," said the stern preacher, "and is given to princes and rulers for an end; which, if they transgress, they that in the fear of God execute judgements when God has commanded offend not God. Neither yet sin they that bridle kings who strike innocent men in their rage." The Queen was forced to look on while nearly fifty Catholics, some of them high ecclesiastics, were indicted and sent to prison for celebrating mass in Paisley and Ayrshire.

Peace with France.

The zeal of the preachers was only heightened by the coolness of the Lords. A Scotch Parliament which assembled in the summer of 1563 contented itself with securing the spoilers in their possession of the Church lands, but left the Acts passed in 1560 for the establishment of Protestantism unconfirmed as before. Such a silence Knox regarded as treason to the faith. He ceased to have any further intercourse with Murray, and addressed a burning appeal to the Lords, "Will ye betray God's cause when ye have it in your hands to establish it as ye please? The Queen, ye say, will not agree with you. Ask ye of her that which by God's word ye may justly require, and if she will not agree with ye in God, ye are not bound to agree with her in the devil!" The inaction of the nobles proved the strength which Mary drew from the attitude of France. So long as France and England were at war, so long as a French force might at

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

any moment be despatched to Mary's aid, it was impossible for them to put pressure on the Queen; and bold as was the action of the preachers the Queen only waited her opportunity for dealing them a fatal blow. But whatever hopes Mary may have founded on the strife, they were soon brought to an end. Catharine used her triumph only to carry out her system of balance, and to resist the joint remonstrance of the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of Spain against her edict of toleration. The policy of Elizabeth, on the other hand, was too much identified with Catharine's success to leave room for further hostilities; and a treaty of peace between the two countries was concluded in the spring of 1564.

Darnley.

The peace with France marked a crisis in the struggle between the rival Queens. It left Elizabeth secure against a Catholic rising and free to meet the pressure from the north. But it dashed the last hopes of Mary Stuart to the ground. The policy which she had pursued from her landing in Scotland had proved a failure in the end at which it aimed. Her religious toleration, her patience, her fair speeches, had failed to win from Elizabeth a promise of the succession. And meanwhile the Calvinism she hated was growing bolder and bolder about her. The strife of religion in France had woke a fiercer bigotry in the Scotch preachers. Knox had discovered her plans of reaction, had publicly denounced her designs of a Catholic marriage, and had met her angry tears, her threats of vengeance, with a cool defiance. All that Murray's policy seemed to have really done was to estrange from her the English Catholics. Already alienated from Mary by her connexion with France, which they still regarded as a half-heretic power, and by the hostility of Philip, in whom they trusted as a pure Catholic, the adherents of the older faith could hardly believe in the Queen's fidelity to their religion when they saw her abandoning Scotland to heresy and holding out hopes of her acceptance of the Anglican creed. Her presence had roused them to a new energy,

and they were drifting more and more as the strife waxed warmer abroad to dreams of forcing on Elizabeth a Catholic successor. But as yet their hopes turned not so much to Mary Stuart as to the youth who stood next to the Scottish Queen in the line of blood. Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, was a son of the Countess of Lennox, Margaret Douglas, a daughter of Margaret Tudor by her second marriage with the Earl of Angus. Lady Lennox was the successor whom Mary Tudor would willingly have chosen in her sister's stead, had Philip and the Parliament suffered her; and from the moment of Elizabeth's accession the Countess had schemed to drive her from the throne. She offered Philip to fly with her boy to the Low Countries and to serve as a pretender in his hands. She intrigued with the partizans of the old religion. Though the house of Lennox conformed to the new system of English worship, its sympathies were known to be Catholic, and the hopes of the Catholics wrapped themselves round its heir. "Should any disaster befall the Queen," wrote a Spanish ambassador in 1560, "the Catholics would choose Lord Darnley for King." "Not only," he adds in a later letter, "would all sides agree to choose him were the Queen to die, but the Catholic Lords, if opportunity offer, may declare for him at once."

Mary and Darnley.

His strongest rival was Mary Stuart, and before Mary landed in Scotland Lady Lennox planned the union of both their claims by the marriage of her son with the Scottish Queen. A few days after her landing Mary received a formal offer of his hand. Hopes of yet greater matches, of a marriage with Philip's son, Don Carlos, or with the young French King, Charles the Ninth, had long held the scheme at bay; but as these and her policy of conciliation proved alike fruitless Mary turned to the Lennoxes. The marriage was probably planned by David Rizzio, a young Piedmontese who had won the Scotch Queen's favour, and through whom she conducted the intrigues, both in England and abroad, by which she purposed to

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

free herself from Murray's power and to threaten Elizabeth. Her diplomacy was winning Philip to her cause. The Spanish King had as yet looked upon Mary's system of toleration and on her hopes from France with equal suspicion. But he now drew slowly to her side. Pressed hard in the Mediterranean by the Turks, he was harassed more than ever by the growing discontent of the Netherlands, where the triumph of Protestantism in England and Scotland and the power of the Huguenots in France gave fresh vigour to the growth of Calvinism, and where the nobles were stirred to new outbreaks against the foreign rule of Spain by the success of the Scottish Lords in their rising and by the terms of semi-independence which the French nobles wrested from the Queen. It was to hold the Netherlands in check that Philip longed for Mary's success. Her triumph over Murray and his confederates would vindicate the cause of monarchy; her triumph over Calvinism would vindicate that of Catholicism both in her own realm and in the realm which she hoped to win. He sent her therefore assurances of his support, and assurances as strong reached her from the Vatican. The dispensation which was secretly obtained for her marriage with Darnley was granted on the pledge of both to do their utmost for the restoration of the old religion.

The Darnley Marriage

Secret as was the pledge, the mere whisper of the match revealed their danger to the Scotch Protestants. The Lords of the Congregation woke with a start from their confidence in the Queen. Murray saw that the policy to which he had held his sister since her arrival in the realm was now to be abandoned. Mary was no longer to be the Catholic ruler of a Protestant country, seeking peaceful acknowledgement of her right of succession to Elizabeth's throne; she had placed herself at the head of the English Catholics, and such a position at once threatened the safety of Protestantism in Scotland itself. If once Elizabeth were overthrown by a Catholic rising, and a Catholic policy established in England, Scotch Protest-

antism was at an end. At the first rumour of the match therefore Murray drew Argyle and the Hamiltons round him in a band of self-defence, and refused his signature to a paper recommending Darnley as husband to the Queen. But Mary's diplomacy detached from him lord after lord, till his only hope lay in the opposition of Elizabeth. The marriage with Darnley was undoubtedly a danger even more formidable to England than to Scotland. It put an end to the dissensions which had till now broken the strength of the English Catholics. It rallied them round Mary and Darnley as successors to the throne. It gathered to their cause the far greater mass of cautious conservatives who had been detached from Mary by her foreign blood and by dread of her kinship with the Guises. Darnley was reckoned an Englishman, and with an English husband to sway her policy Mary herself seemed to become an Englishwoman. But it was in vain that the Council pronounced the marriage a danger to the realm, that Elizabeth threatened Mary with war, or that she plotted with Murray for the seizure of Mary and the driving Darnley back over the border. Threat and plot were too late to avert the union, and at the close of July, 1565, Darnley was married to Mary Stuart and proclaimed King of Scotland. Murray at once called the Lords of the Congregation to arms. But the most powerful and active stood aloof. As heir of the line of Angus, Darnley was by blood the head of the house of Douglas, and Protestants as they were, the Douglases rallied to their kinsman. Their actual chieftain, the Earl of Morton, stood next to Murray himself in his power over the Congregation; he was chancellor of the realm; and his strength as a great noble was backed by a dark and unscrupulous ability. By waiving their claim to the earldom of Angus and the lands which he held, the Lennoxes won Morton to his kinsman's cause, and the Earl was followed in his course by two of the sternest and most active among the Protestant Lords, Darnley's uncle,

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

Lord Ruthven, and Lord Lindesay, who had married a Douglas. Their desertion broke Murray's strength; and his rising was hardly declared when Mary marched on his little force with pistols in her belt, and drove its leaders over the border.

Mary and Catholicism.

The work which Elizabeth had done in Scotland had been undone in an hour. Murray was a fugitive. The Lords of the Congregation were broken or dispersed. The English party was ruined. And while Scotland was lost it seemed as if the triumph of Mary was a signal for the general revival of Catholicism. The influence of the Guises had again become strong in France, and though Catharine of Medicis held firmly to her policy of toleration, an interview which she held with Alva at Bayonne led every Protestant to believe in the conclusion of a league between France and Spain for a common war on Protestantism. To this league the English statesmen held that Mary Stuart had become a party, and her pressure upon Elizabeth was backed by the suspicion that the two great monarchies had pledged her their support. No such league existed, nor had such a pledge been given, but the dread served Mary's purpose as well as the reality could have done. Girt in, as she believed, with foes, Elizabeth took refuge in the meanest dissimulation, while Mary Stuart imperiously demanded a recognition of her succession as the price of peace. But her aims went far beyond this demand. She found herself greeted at Rome as the champion of the Faith. Pius the Fifth, who mounted the Papal throne at the moment of her success, seized on the young Queen to strike the first blow in the crusade against Protestantism on which he was set. He promised her troops and money. He would support her, he said, so long as he had a single chalice to sell. "With the help of God and your Holiness," Mary wrote back, "I will leap over the wall." In England itself the marriage and her new attitude rallied every Catholic to Mary's standard; and the announcement of her pregnancy which followed

gave her a strength that swept aside Philip's counsels of caution and delay. The daring advice of Rizzio fell in with her natural temper. She resolved to restore Catholicism in Scotland. Yield as she might to Murray's pressure, she had dexterously refrained from giving legal confirmation to the resolutions of the Parliament by which Calvinism had been set up in Scotland; and in the Parliament which she summoned for the coming spring she trusted to do "some good anent restoring the old religion." The appearance of the Catholic lords, the Earls of Huntly, Athol, and Bothwell, at Mary's court showed her purpose to attempt this religious revolution. Nor were her political schemes less resolute. She was determined to wring from the coming Parliament a confirmation of the banishment of the lords who had fled with Murray which would free her for ever from the pressure of the Protestant nobles. Mistress of her kingdom, politically as well as religiously, Mary could put a pressure on Elizabeth which might win for her more than an acknowledgement of her right to the succession. She still clung to her hopes of the crown; and she knew that the Catholics of Northumberland and Yorkshire were ready to revolt as soon as she was ready to aid them.

The murder of Rizzio.

No such danger had ever threatened Elizabeth as this. But again she could "trust to fortune" Mary had staked all on her union with Darnley, and yet only a few months had passed since her wedding-day when men saw that she "hated the King." The boy turned out a dissolute, insolent husband; and Mary's scornful refusal of his claim of the "crown matrimonial," which would have given him an equal share of the royal power with herself, widened the breach between them. Darnley attributed this refusal to Rizzio's counsels; and his father, Lord Lennox, joined with him in plotting vengeance against the secretary. They sought aid from the very party whom Darnley's marriage had been planned to crush. Though the strength of the Protestant nobles had been broken by the

CHAP. IV. — England and Mary Stuart. — 1561-1567.

flight of Murray, the Douglases remained at the court. Morton had no purpose of lending himself to the ruin of the religion he professed, and Ruthven and Lindesay were roused to action when they saw themselves threatened with a restoration of Catholicism, and with a legal banishment of Murray and his companions in the coming Parliament, which could only serve as a prelude to their own ruin. Rizzio was the author of this policy; and when Darnley called on his kinsmen to aid him in attacking Rizzio, the Douglases grasped at his proposal. Their aid and their promise of the crown matrimonial was bought by Darnley's consent to the recall of the fugitive lords and of Murray. The plot of the Douglases was so jealously hidden that no whisper of it reached the Queen. Her plans were on the brink of success. The Catholic nobles were ready for action at her court. Huntly and Bothwell were called into the Privy Council. At the opening of March 1566 the Parliament which was to carry out her projects was to assemble; and the Queen prepared for her decisive stroke by naming men whom she could trust as Lords of the Articles—a body with whom lay the proposal of measures to the Houses—and by restoring the bishops to their old places among the peers. But at the moment when Mary revealed the extent of her schemes by her dismissal of the English ambassador, the young King, followed by Lord Ruthven, burst into her chamber, dragged Rizzio from her presence, and stabbed him in an outer chamber, while Morton and Lord Lindsay with their followers seized the palace gate. Mary found herself a prisoner in the hands of her husband and his confederates. Her plans were wrecked in an hour. A proclamation of the King dissolved the Parliament which she had called for the ruin of her foes; and Murray, who was on his way back from England when the deed was done, was received at Court and restored to his old post at the Council-board.

Mary's revenge.

Terrible as the blow had been, it roused the more terrible energies which lay hid beneath the graceful

bearing of the Queen. The darker features of her character were now to develope themselves. With an inflexible will she turned to build up again the policy which seemed shattered in Rizzio's murder. Her passionate resentment bent to the demands of her ambition. "No more tears," she said when they brought her news of Rizzio's murder; "I will think upon revenge." But even revenge was not suffered to interfere with her political schemes. Keen as was Mary's thirst for vengeance on him, Darnley was needful to the triumph of her aims, and her first effort was to win him back. He was already grudging at the supremacy of the nobles and his virtual exclusion from power, when Mary masking her hatred beneath a show of affection succeeded in severing the wretched boy from his fellow-conspirators, and in gaining his help in an escape to Dunbar. Once free, a force of eight thousand men under the Earl of Bothwell quickly gathered round her, and with these troops she marched in triumph on Edinburgh. An offer of pardon to all save those concerned in Rizzio's murder broke up the force of the Lords; Glencairn and Argyle joined the Queen, while Morton, Ruthven, and Lindesay fled in terror over the border. But Mary had learned by a terrible lesson the need of dissimulation. She made no show of renewing her Catholic policy. On the contrary, she affected to resume the system which she had pursued from the opening of her reign, and suffered Murray to remain at the court. Rizzio's death had in fact strengthened her position. With him passed away the dread of a Catholic reaction. Mary's toleration, her pledges of extending an equal indulgence to Protestantism in England, should she mount its throne, her marriage to one who was looked upon as an English noble, above all the hope of realizing through her succession the dream of a union of the realms, again told on the wavering body of more Conservative statesmen, like Norfolk, and even drew to her side some of the steadier Protestants who despaired of a Protestant

CHAP. IV.

England and Mary Stuart.

1561-1567.

CHAP. IV. succession. Even Elizabeth at last seemed wavering towards a recognition of her as her successor. But Mary aimed at more than the succession. Her intrigues with the English Catholics were never interrupted. Her seeming reconciliation with the young King preserved that union of the whole Catholic body which her marriage had brought about and which the strife over Rizzio threatened with ruin. Her court was full of refugees from the northern counties. "Your actions," Elizabeth wrote in a sudden break of fierce candour, "are as full of venom as your words are of honey." Fierce words however did nothing to break the clouds that gathered thicker and thicker round England: and in June the birth of a boy, the future James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, doubled Mary's strength. Elizabeth felt bitterly the blow. "The Queen of Scots," she cried, "has a fair son, and I am but a barren stock." The birth of James in fact seemed to settle the long struggle in Mary's favour. The moderate Conservatives joined the ranks of her adherents. The Catholics were wild with hope. "Your friends are so increased," her ambassador, Melville, wrote to her from England, "that many whole shires are ready to rebel, and their captains named by election of the nobility." On the other hand, the Protestants were filled with despair. It seemed as if no effort could avert the rule of England by a Catholic Queen.

England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

The developement of England.

It was at this moment of peril that the English Parliament was again called together. Its action showed more than the natural anxiety of the time; it showed the growth of those national forces which far more than the schemes of Mary or the counter-schemes of Elizabeth were to determine the future of England. While the two queens were heaping intrigue on intrigue, while abroad and at home every statesman held firmly that national welfare or national misery hung on the fortune of the one or the success of the other, the English people itself was steadily moving forward to a new spiritual

enlightenment and a new political liberty. The intellectual and religious impulses of the age were already combining with the influence of its growing wealth to revive a spirit of independence in the nation at large. It was impossible for Elizabeth to understand this spirit, but her wonderful tact enabled her from the first to feel the strength of it. Long before any open conflict arose between the people and the Crown we see her instinctive perception of the changes which were going on around her in the modifications, conscious or unconscious, which she introduced into the system of the monarchy. Of its usurpations upon English liberty she abandoned none. But she curtailed and softened down almost all. She tampered, as her predecessors had tampered, with personal freedom; there was the same straining of statutes and coercion of juries in political trials as before, and an arbitrary power of imprisonment was still exercized by the Council. The duties she imposed on cloth and sweet wines were an assertion of her right of arbitrary taxation. Proclamations in Council constantly assumed the force of law. But, boldly as it was asserted, the royal power was practically wielded with a caution and moderation that showed the sense of a growing difficulty in the full exercize of it. The ordinary course of justice was left undisturbed. The jurisdiction of the Council was asserted almost exclusively over the Catholics; and defended in their case as a precaution against pressing dangers. The proclamations issued were temporary in character and of small importance. The two duties imposed were so slight as to pass almost unnoticed in the general satisfaction at Elizabeth's abstinence from internal taxation. She abandoned the benevolences and forced loans which had brought home the sense of tyranny to the subjects of her predecessors. She treated the Privy Seals, which on emergencies she issued for advances to her Exchequer, simply as anticipations of her revenue (like our own Exchequer Bills), and punctually repaid them.

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

The monopolies with which she fettered trade proved a more serious grievance; but during her earlier reign they were looked on as a part of the system of Merchant Associations, which were at that time regarded as necessary for the regulation and protection of the growing commerce.

The advance of the Parliament.

The political developement of the nation is seen still more in the advance of the Parliament during Elizabeth's reign. The Queen's thrift enabled her in ordinary times of peace to defray the current expenses of the Crown from its ordinary revenues. But her thrift was dictated not so much by economy as by a desire to avoid summoning fresh Parliaments. We have seen how boldly the genius of Thomas Cromwell set aside on this point the tradition of the New Monarchy. His confidence in the power of the Crown revived the Parliament as an easy and manageable instrument of tyranny. The old forms of constitutional freedom were turned to the profit of the royal despotism, and a revolution which for the moment left England absolutely at Henry's feet was wrought out by a series of parliamentary statutes. Throughout Henry's reign Cromwell's confidence was justified by the spirit of slavish submission which pervaded the Houses. But the effect of the religious change for which his measures made room began to be felt during the minority of Edward the Sixth; and the debates and divisions on the religious reaction which Mary pressed on the Parliament were many and violent. A great step forward was marked by the effort of the Crown to neutralize by "management" an opposition which it could no longer overawe. Not only was the Parliament packed with nominees of the Crown but new constituencies were created whose members would follow implicitly its will. For this purpose twenty-two new boroughs were created under Edward, fourteen under Mary; some, indeed, places entitled to representation by their wealth and population, but the bulk of them small towns or hamlets which lay wholly at the disposal of the Royal Council.

CHAP. VII
England and Mary Stuart.
1561-1567.

Elizabeth and the Houses.

Elizabeth adopted the system of her two predecessors both in the creation of boroughs and the recommendation of candidates; but her keen political instinct soon perceived the inutility of both expedients. She saw that the "management" of the Houses, so easy under Cromwell, was becoming harder every day. The very number of the members she called up into the Commons from nomination boroughs, sixty-two in all, showed the increasing difficulty which the government found in securing a working majority. The rise of a new nobility enriched by the spoils of the Church and trained to political life by the stress of events around them was giving fresh vigour to the House of Lords. The increased wealth of the country gentry as well as the growing desire to obtain a seat among the Commons brought about the cessation at this time of the old payment of members by their constituencies. A change too in the borough representation, which had long been in progress but was now for the first time legally recognized, tended greatly to increase the vigour and independence of the Lower House. By the terms of the older writs borough members were required to be chosen from the body of the burgesses; and an act of Henry the Fifth gave this custom the force of law. But the passing of such an act shows that the custom was already widely infringed, and by Elizabeth's day act and custom alike had ceased to have force. Most seats were now filled by representatives who were strange to the borough itself, and who were often nominees of the great landowners round. But they were commonly men of wealth and blood whose aim in entering parliament was a purely political one, and whose attitude towards the Crown was far bolder and more independent than that of the quiet tradesmen who preceded them. Elizabeth saw that "management" was of little avail with a house of members such as these; and she fell back as far as she could on Wolsey's policy of practical abolition. She summoned Parliaments at longer and longer intervals. By

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

rigid economy, by a policy of balance and peace, she strove, and for a long time successfully strove, to avoid the necessity of assembling them at all. But Mary of Scotland and Philip of Spain proved friends to English liberty in its sorest need. The struggle with Catholicism forced Elizabeth to have more frequent recourse to her Parliaments, and as she was driven to appeal for increasing supplies the tone of the Houses rose higher and higher.

The struggle with the Parliament.

What made this revival of Parliamentary independence more important was the range which Cromwell's policy had given to Parliamentary action. In theory the Tudor statesman regarded three cardinal subjects, matters of trade, matters of religion, and matters of State, as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. But in actual fact such subjects had been treated by Parliament after Parliament. The whole religious fabric of the realm rested on Parliamentary enactments. The very title of Elizabeth rested in a Parliamentary statute. When the Houses petitioned at the outset of her reign for the declaration of a successor and for the Queen's marriage it was impossible for her to deny their right to intermeddle with these "matters of State," though she rebuked the demand and evaded an answer. But the question of the succession was a question too vital for English freedom and English religion to remain prisoned within Elizabeth's council-chamber. It came again to the front in the Parliament which the pressure from Mary Stuart forced Elizabeth to assemble after six prorogations and an interval of four years in September, 1566. The Lower House at once resolved that the business of supply should go hand in hand with that of the succession. Such a step put a stress on the monarchy which it had never known since the War of the Roses. The Commons no longer confined themselves to limiting or resisting the policy of the Crown; they dared to dictate it. Elizabeth's wrath showed her sense of the importance of their action.

CHAP. IV.

England and Mary Stuart.

1562–1567.

"They had acted like rebels!" she said, "they had dealt with her as they dared not have dealt with her father." "I cannot tell," she broke out angrily to the Spanish ambassador, "what these devils want!" "They want liberty, madam," replied the Spaniard, "and if princes do not look to themselves and work together to put such people down they will find before long what all this is coming to!" But Elizabeth had to front more than her Puritan Commons. The Lords joined with the Lower House in demanding the Queen's marriage and a settlement of the succession, and after a furious burst of anger Elizabeth gave a promise of marriage, which she was no doubt resolved to evade as she had evaded it before. But the subject of the succession was one which could not be evaded. Yet any decision on it meant civil war. It was notorious that if the Commons were resolute to name the Lady Catharine Grey, the heiress of the House of Suffolk, successor to the throne, the Lords were as resolute to assert the right of Mary Stuart. To settle such a matter was at once to draw the sword. The Queen therefore peremptorily forbade the subject to be approached. But the royal message was no sooner delivered than Wentworth, a member of the House of Commons, rose to ask whether such a prohibition was not "against the liberties of Parliament." The question was followed by a hot debate, and a fresh message from the Queen commanding "that there should be no further argument" was met by a request for freedom of deliberation while the subsidy bill lay significantly unnoticed on the table. A new strife broke out when another member of the Commons, Mr. Dalton, denounced the claims put forward by the Scottish Queen. Elizabeth at once ordered him into arrest. But the Commons prayed for leave "to confer upon their liberties," and the Queen's prudence taught her that it was necessary to give way. She released Dalton; she protested to the Commons that "she did not mean to prejudice any part of the liberties heretofore granted

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

them;" she softened the order of silence into a request. Won by the graceful concession, the Lower House granted the subsidy and assented loyally to her wish. But the victory was none the less a real one. No such struggle had taken place between the Crown and the Commons since the beginning of the New Monarchy; and the struggle had ended in the virtual defeat of the Crown.

Shane O'Neill.

The strife with the Parliament hit Elizabeth hard. It was "secret foes at home," she told the House as the quarrel passed away in a warm reconciliation, "who thought to work me that mischief which never foreign enemies could bring to pass, which is the hatred of my Commons. Do you think that either I am so unmindful of your surety by succession, wherein is all my care, or that I went about to break your liberties? No! it never was my meaning; but to stay you before you fell into the ditch." But it was impossible for her to explain the real reasons for her course, and the dissolution of the Parliament in January, 1567, left her face to face with a national discontent added to the ever-deepening peril from without. To the danger from the north and from the east was added a danger from the west. The north of Ireland was in full revolt. From the moment of her accession Elizabeth had realized the risks of the policy of confiscation and colonization which had been pursued in the island by her predecessor: and the prudence of Cecil fell back on the safer though more tedious policy of Henry the Eighth. But the alarm at English aggression had already spread among the natives; and its result was seen in a revolt of the north, and in the rise of a leader more vigorous and able than any with whom the Government had had as yet to contend. An acceptance of the Earldom of Tyrone by the chief of the O'Neills brought about the inevitable conflict between the system of succession recognized by English and that recognized by Irish law. On the death of the Earl of Tyrone England acknowledged his eldest son as the heir of his Earldom; while the

sept of which he was the head maintained their older right of choosing a chief from among the members of the family, and preferred Shane O'Neill, a younger son of less doubtful legitimacy. The Lord Deputy, the Earl of Sussex, marched northward to settle the question by force of arms; but ere he could reach Ulster the activity of Shane had quelled the disaffection of his rivals, the O'Donnells of Donegal, and won over the Scots of Antrim. "Never before," wrote Sussex, "durst Scot or Irishman look Englishman in the face in plain or wood since I came here;" but Shane fired his men with a new courage, and charging the Deputy's army with a force hardly half its number drove it back in rout on Armagh. A promise of pardon induced the Irish chieftain to visit London, and make an illusory submission, but he was no sooner safe home again than its terms were set aside; and after a wearisome struggle, in which Shane foiled the efforts of the Lord Deputy to entrap or to poison him, he remained virtually master of the north. His success stirred larger dreams of ambition. He invaded Connaught, and pressed Clanrickard hard; while he replied to the remonstrances of the Council at Dublin with a bold defiance. "By the sword I have won these lands," he answered, "and by the sword will I keep them." But defiance broke idly against the skill and vigour of Sir Henry Sidney, who succeeded Sussex as Lord Deputy. The rival septs of the north were drawn into a rising against O'Neill, while the English army advanced from the Pale; and in 1567 Shane, defeated by the O'Donnells, took refuge in Antrim, and was hewn to pieces in a drunken squabble by his Scottish entertainers.

Bothwell.

The victory of Sidney marked the turn of the tide which had run so long against Elizabeth. The danger which England dreaded from Mary Stuart, the terror of a Catholic sovereign and a Catholic re-action, reached its height only to pass irretrievably away. At the moment when the Irish revolt was being trampled under foot a terrible event suddenly struck light through the

CHAP. IV. — England and Mary Stuart. — 1561-1567.

gathering clouds in the north. Mary had used Darnley as a tool to bring about the ruin of his confederates and to further her policy; but from the moment that she discovered his actual complicity in the plot for Rizzio's murder she had loathed and avoided him. Ominous words dropped from her lips. "Unless she were free of him some way," Mary was heard to mutter, "she had no pleasure to live." The lords whom he had drawn into his plot only to desert and betray them hated him with as terrible a hatred, and in their longing for vengeance a new adventurer saw the road to power. Of all the border nobles James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell, was the boldest and the most unscrupulous. But, Protestant as he was, he had never swerved from the side of the Crown; he had supported the Regent, and crossed the seas to pledge as firm a support to Mary; and his loyalty and daring alike appealed to the young Queen's heart. Little as he was touched by Mary's passion, it stirred in the Earl dreams of a union with the Queen; and great as were the obstacles to such a union which presented themselves in Mary's marriage and his own, Bothwell was of too desperate a temper to recoil before obstacles such as these. Divorce would free him from his own wife. To free himself from Darnley he seized on the hatred which the lords whom Darnley had deserted and betrayed bore to the King. Bothwell joined Murray and the English ambassador in praying for the recall of Morton and the exiles. The pardon was granted; the nobles returned to court, and the bulk of them joined readily in a conspiracy to strike down one whom they still looked on as their bitterest foe.

Darnley's murder.

Morton alone stood aloof. He demanded an assurance of the Queen's sanction to the deed; and no such assurance was given him. On the contrary Mary's mood seemed suddenly to change. Her hatred to Darnley passed all at once into demonstration of the old affection. He had fallen sick with vice and misery, and

she visited him on his sick-bed, and persuaded him to follow her to Edinburgh. She visited him again in a ruinous and lonely house near the palace in which he was lodged by her order, on the ground that its purer air would further his recovery, kissed him as she bade him farewell, and rode gaily back to a wedding-dance at Holyrood. If Mary's passion had drawn her to share Bothwell's guilt, these acts were but awful preludes to her husband's doom. If on the other hand her reconciliation was a real one, it only drove Bothwell to hurry on his deed of blood without waiting for the aid of the nobles who had sworn the King's death. The terrible secret is still hid in a cloud of doubt and mystery which will probably never be wholly dispelled. But Mary had hardly returned to her palace when, two hours after midnight on the ninth of February, 1567, an awful explosion shook the city. The burghers rushed out from the gates to find the house of Kirk o' Field destroyed and Darnley's body dead beside the ruins.

Mary's fall.

The murder was undoubtedly the deed of Bothwell. It was soon known that his servant had stored the powder beneath the King's bed-chamber and that the Earl had watched without the walls till the deed was done. But, in spite of gathering suspicion and of a charge of murder made formally against Bothwell by Lord Lennox, no serious steps were taken to investigate the crime; and a rumour that Mary purposed to marry the murderer drove her friends to despair. Her agent in England wrote to her that "if she married that man she would lose the favour of God, her own reputation, and the hearts of all England, Ireland, and Scotland." But whatever may have been the ties of passion or guilt which united them, Mary was now powerless in Bothwell's hands. While Murray withdrew to France on pretext of travel, the young Earl used the plot against Darnley into which he had drawn the lords to force from them a declaration that he was guiltless of the murder and their consent to his marriage with the Queen. He boasted that he would marry Mary, whether she would

CHAP. IV. England and Mary Stuart. 1561-1567.

or no. Every stronghold in the kingdom was placed in his hands, and this step was the prelude to a trial and acquittal which the overwhelming force of his followers in Edinburgh turned into a bitter mockery. The Protestants were bribed by the assembling of a Parliament in which Mary for the first time gave her sanction to the laws which established the reformation in Scotland. A shameless suit for his divorce removed the last obstacle to Bothwell's ambition; and a seizure of the Queen as she rode to Linlithgow, whether real or fictitious, was followed three weeks later by their union on the fifteenth of May. Mary may have yielded to force; she may have yielded to passion; it is possible that in Bothwell's vigour she saw the means of at last mastering the kingdom and wreaking her vengeance on the lords. But whatever were her hopes or fears, in a month more all was over. The horror at the Queen's marriage with a man fresh from her husband's blood drove the whole nation to revolt. The Catholic party held aloof from a Queen who seemed to have forsaken them by a Protestant marriage and by her acknowledgement of the Protestant Church. The Protestant lords seized on the general horror to free themselves from a master whose subtlety and bloodshed had placed them at his feet. Morton and Argyle rallied the forces of the Congregation at Stirling, and were soon joined by the bulk of the Scottish nobles of either religion. Their entrance into Edinburgh roused the capital into insurrection. On the fifteenth of June Mary and her husband advanced with a fair force to Seton to encounter the Lords; but their men refused to fight, and Bothwell galloped off into lifelong exile, while the Queen was brought back to Edinburgh in a frenzy of despair, tossing back wild words of defiance to the curses of the crowd.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLAND AND THE PAPACY.

1567—1576.

England and religious change.

THE fall of Mary freed Elizabeth from the most terrible of her outer dangers. But it left her still struggling with ever-growing dangers at home. The religious peace for which she had fought so hard was drawing to an end. Sturdily as she might aver to her subjects that no change had really been made in English religion, that the old faith had only been purified, that the realm had only been freed from Papal usurpation, jealously as she might preserve the old episcopate, the old service, the old vestments and usages of public worship, her action abroad told too plainly its tale. The world was slowly drifting to a gigantic conflict between the tradition of the past and a faith that rejected the tradition of the past; and in this conflict men saw that England was ranging itself not on the side of the old belief but of the new. The real meaning of Elizabeth's attitude was revealed in her refusal to own the Council of Trent. From that moment the hold which she had retained on all who still clung strongly to Catholic doctrine was roughly shaken. Her system of conformity received a heavy blow from the decision of the Papacy that attendance at the common prayer was unlawful. Her religious compromise was almost destroyed by the victory of the Guises. In the moment of peril she was driven on Protestant support, and Protestant support had to be bought by a Test Act which excluded every

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

zealous Catholic from all share in the government administration of the realm, while the re-enactment Edward's Articles by the Convocation of the clergy v an avowal of Protestantism which none could mista Whatever in fact might be Elizabeth's own predilectio even the most cautious of Englishmen could hardly dou of the drift of her policy. The hopes which the party moderation had founded on a marriage with Philip, o marriage with the Austrian Archduke, or a marriage w Dudley, had all passed away. The conciliatory efforts Pope Pius had been equally fruitless. The last ho of a quiet undoing of the religious changes lay in t succession of Mary Stuart. But with the fall of M a peaceful return to the older faith became impossib and the consciousness of this could hardly fail to wa new dangers for Elizabeth, whether at home or abroad.

Progress of the Reformation.

It was in fact at this moment of seeming triumph th the great struggle of her reign began In 1565 a pon was chosen to fill the Papal chair whose policy was t of open war between England and Rome. At no mom in its history had the fortunes of the Roman See sunk low as at the accession of Pius the Fifth. The Cath revival had as yet done nothing to arrest the march the Reformation. In less than half a century the n doctrines had spread from Iceland to the Pyrenees a from Finland to the Alps. When Pius mounted t throne Lutheranism was firmly established in Sca dinavia and in Northern Germany. Along the east border of the Empire it had conquered Livonia and (Prussia; its adherents formed a majority of the nobles Poland, Hungary seemed drifting towards heresy; and Transylvania the Diet had already confiscated all Chu lands. In Central Germany the great prelates whose prin doms covered so large a part of Franconia opposed in v the spread of Lutheran doctrine. It seemed as triumph in Southern Germany, for the Duchy of Austria was the most part Lutheran, and many of the Bavarian tow

with a large part of the Bavarian nobles had espoused the cause of the Reformation. In Western Europe the fiercer doctrines of Calvinism took the place of the faith of Luther. At the death of Henry the Second Calvin's missionaries poured from Geneva over France, and in a few years every province of the realm was dotted with Calvinistic churches. The Huguenots rose into a great political and religious party which struggled openly for the mastery of the realm and wrested from the Crown a legal recognition of its existence and of freedom of worship. The influence of France told quickly on the regions about it. The Rhine-land was fast losing its hold on Catholicism. In the Netherlands, where the persecutions of Charles the Fifth had failed to check the upgrowth of heresy, his successor saw Calvinism win state after state, and gird itself to a desperate struggle at once for religious and for civil independence. Still further west a sudden revolution had won Scotland for the faith of Geneva; and a revolution hardly less sudden, though marked with consummate subtlety, had in effect added England to the Churches of the Reformation. Christendom in fact was almost lost to the Papacy; for only two European countries owned its sway without dispute. "There remain firm to the Pope," wrote a Venetian ambassador to his State, "only Spain and Italy with some few islands, and those countries possessed by your Serenity in Dalmatia and Greece."

Pius the Fifth.

It was at this moment of defeat that Pius the Fifth mounted the Papal throne. His earlier life had been that of an Inquisitor; and he combined the ruthlessness of a persecutor with the ascetic devotion of a saint. Pius had but one end, that of re-conquering Christendom, of restoring the rebel nations to the fold of the Church, and of stamping out heresy by fire and sword. To his fiery faith every means of warfare seemed hallowed by the sanctity of his cause. The despotism of the prince, the passion of the populace, the sword of the mercenary, the very dagger of the assassin, were all seized without scruple as

CHAP. V. — England and the Papacy. — 1567-1570.

weapons in the warfare of God. The ruthlessness of the Inquisitor was turned into the world-wide policy of the Papacy. When Philip doubted how to deal with the troubles in the Netherlands, Pius bade him deal with them by force of arms. When the Pope sent soldiers of his own to join the Catholics in France he bade their leader "slay instantly whatever heretic fell into his hands." The massacres of Alva were rewarded by a gift of the consecrated hat and sword, as the massacre of St. Bartholomew was hailed by the successor of Pius with a solemn thanksgiving. The force of the Pope's effort lay in its concentration of every energy on a single aim. Rome drew in fact a new power from the ruin of her schemes of secular aggrandizement. The narrower hopes and dreads which had sprung from their position as Italian princes told no longer on the Popes. All hope of the building up of a wider princedom passed away. The hope of driving the stranger from Italy came equally to an end. But on the other hand Rome was screened from the general conflicts of the secular powers. It was enabled to be the friend of every Catholic State, and that at a moment when every Catholic State saw in the rise of Calvinism a new cause for seeking its friendship. Calvinism drew with it a thirst for political liberty, and religious revolution became the prelude to political revolution. From this moment therefore the cause of the Papacy became the cause of kings, and a craving for self-preservation rallied the Catholic princes round the Papal throne. The same dread of utter ruin rallied round it the Catholic Church. All strife, all controversy was hushed in the presence of the foe. With the close of the Council of Trent came a unity of feeling and of action such as had never been seen before. Faith was defined. The Papal authority stood higher than ever. The bishops owned themselves to be delegates of the Roman See. The clergy were drawn together into a disciplined body by the institution of seminaries. The new religious orders carried everywhere the watchword of

implicit obedience. As the heresy of Calvin pressed on to one victory after another, the Catholic world drew closer and closer round the standard of Rome. CHAP. V. England and the Papacy.

What raised the warfare of Pius into grandeur was the scale upon which he warred. His hand was everywhere throughout Christendom. Under him Rome became the political as well as the religious centre of Western Europe. The history of the Papacy widened again, as in the Middle Ages, into the history of the world. Every scheme of the Catholic resistance was devized or emboldened at Rome. While her Jesuit emissaries won a new hold in Bavaria and Southern Germany, rolled back the tide of Protestantism in the Rhine-land, and by school and pulpit laboured to re-Catholicize the Empire, Rome spurred Mary Stuart to the Darnley marriage, urged Philip to march Alva on the Netherlands, broke up the religious truce which Catharine had won for France, and celebrated with solemn pomp the massacre of the Huguenots. England above all was the object of Papal attack. The realm of Elizabeth was too important for the general Papal scheme of re-conquering Christendom to be lightly let go. England alone could furnish a centre to the reformed communions of Western Europe. The Lutheran states of North Germany were too small. The Scandinavian kingdoms were too remote. Scotland hardly ranked as yet as a European power. Even if France joined the new movement her influence would long be neutralized by the strife of the religious parties within her pale. But England was to outer seeming a united realm. Her government held the country firmly in hand. Whether as an island or from her neighbourhood to the chief centres of the religious strife, she was so placed as to give an effective support to the new opinions. Protestant refugees found a safe shelter within her bounds. Her trading ships diffused heresy in every port they touched at. She could at little risk feed the Calvinistic revolution in France or the Netherlands. In the great battle of the old faith and the new England 1567-1578. England and Rome.

CHAP. V.

England and the Papacy.

1567-1576.

was thus the key of the reformed position. With England Protestant the fight against Protestantism could only be a slow and doubtful one. On the other hand a Catholic England would render religious revolution in the west all but hopeless. Hand in hand with Philip religiously, as she already was politically, the great island might turn the tide of the mighty conflict which had so long gone against the Papacy.

Philip and the Netherlands.

It was from this sense of the importance of England in the world-wide struggle which it was preparing that Rome had watched with such a feverish interest the effort of Mary Stuart. Her victory would have given to Catholicism the two westernmost realms of the Reformation, England and Scotland; it would have aided it in the re-conquest of the Netherlands and of France. No formal bond indeed, such as the Calvinists believed to exist, bound Mary and Pius and Philip and Catharine of Medicis together in a vast league for the restoration of the Faith; their difference of political aim held France and Spain obstinately apart both from each other and from Mary Stuart, and it was only at the Vatican that the great movement was conceived as a whole. But practically the policy of Mary and Philip worked forward to the same end. While the Scottish Queen prepared her counter-reformation in England and Scotland, Philip was gathering a formidable host which was to suppress Calvinism as well as liberty in the Netherlands. Of the seventeen provinces which Philip had inherited from his father, Charles, in this part of his dominions, each had its own constitution, its own charter and privileges, its own right of taxation. All clung to their local independence; and resistance to any projects of centralization was common to the great nobles and the burghers of the towns. Philip on the other hand was resolute to bring them by gradual steps to the same level of absolute subjection and incorporation in the body of the monarchy as the provinces of Castille. The Netherlands were the wealthiest part of his dominions. Flanders

alone contributed more to his exchequer than all his kingdoms in Spain. With a treasury drained by a thousand schemes Philip longed to have this wealth at his unfettered disposal, while his absolutism recoiled from the independence of the States, and his bigotry drove him to tread their heresy under foot. Policy backed the impulses of greed and fanaticism. In the strangely mingled mass of the Spanish monarchy, the one bond which held together its various parts, divided as they were by blood, by tradition, by tongue, was their common faith. Philip was in more than name the "Catholic King." Catholicism alone united the burgher of the Netherlands to the nobles of Castille, or Milanese and Neapolitan to the Aztec of Mexico and Peru. With such an empire heresy meant to Philip political chaos, and the heresy of Calvin, with its ready organization and its doctrine of resistance, promised not only chaos but active revolt. In spite therefore of the growing discontent in the Netherlands, in spite of the alienation of the nobles and the resistance of the Estates, he clung to a system of government which ignored the liberties of every province, and to a persecution which drove thousands of skilled workmen to the shores of England.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

Alva.

At last the general discontent took shape in open resistance. The success of the French Huguenots in wresting the free exercize of their faith from the monarchy told on the Calvinists of the Low Countries. The nobles gathered in leagues. Riots broke out in the towns. The churches were sacked, and heretic preachers preached in the open fields to multitudes who carried weapons to protect them. If Philip's system was to continue it must be by force of arms, and the King seized the disturbances as a pretext for dealing a blow he had long meditated at the growing heresy of this portion of his dominions. Pius the Fifth pressed him to deal with heresy by the sword, and in 1567 an army of ten thousand men gathered in Italy under the Duke of Alva for a march on the Low Countries.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

Had Alva reached the Netherlands while Mary was still in the flush of her success, it is hard to see how England could have been saved. But again Fortune proved Elizabeth's friend. The passion of Mary shattered the hopes of Catholicism, and at the moment when Alva led his troops over the Alps Mary passed a prisoner within the walls of Lochleven. Alone however the Duke was a mighty danger: nor could any event have been more embarrassing to Elizabeth than his arrival in the Netherlands in the autumn of 1567. The terror he inspired hushed all thought of resistance. The towns were occupied. The heretics were burned. The greatest nobles were sent to the block or driven, like William of Orange, from the country. The Netherlands lay at Philip's feet; and Alva's army lowered like a thundercloud over the Protestant West.

Mary's abdication.

The triumph of Catholicism and the presence of a Catholic army in a country so closely connected with England at once revived the dreams of a Catholic rising against Elizabeth's throne, while the news of Alva's massacres stirred in every one of her Protestant subjects a thirst for revenge which it was hard to hold in check. Yet to strike a blow at Alva was impossible. Antwerp was the great mart of English trade, and a stoppage of the trade with Flanders, such as war must bring about, would have broken half the merchants in London. Elizabeth could only look on while the Duke trod resistance and heresy under foot, and prepared in the Low Countries a securer starting-point for his attack on Protestantism in the West. With Elizabeth, indeed, or her cautious and moderate Lutheranism Philip had as yet little will to meddle, however hotly Rome might urge him to attack her. He knew that the Calvinism of the Netherlands looked for support to the Calvinism of France; and as soon as Alva's work was done in the Low Countries the Duke had orders to aid the Guises in assailing the Huguenots. But the terror of the Huguenots precipitated the strife, and while Alva was still busy with attacks from

the patriots under the princes of the house of Orange a fresh rising in France woke the civil war at the close of 1567. Catharine lulled this strife for the moment by a new edict of toleration; but the presence of Alva was stirring hopes and fears in other lands than France. Between Mary Stuart and the lords who had imprisoned her in Lochleven reconciliation was impossible. Elizabeth, once lightened of her dread from Mary, would have been content with a restoration of Murray's actual supremacy. Already alarmed by Calvinistic revolt against monarchy in France, she was still more alarmed by the success of Calvinistic revolt against monarchy in Scotland; and the presence of Alva in the Netherlands made her anxious above all to settle the troubles in the north and to devise some terms of reconciliation between Mary and her subjects. But it was in vain that she demanded the release of the Queen. The Scotch Protestants, with Knox at their head, called loudly for Mary's death as a murderess. If the lords shrank from such extremities, they had no mind to set her free and to risk their heads for Elizabeth's pleasure. As the price of her life they forced Mary to resign her crown in favour of her child, and to name Murray, who was now returning from France, as regent during his minority. In July, 1567, the babe was solemnly crowned as James the Sixth.

CHAP. England and the Papacy 1567-1576

But Mary had only consented to abdicate because she felt sure of escape. With an infant king the regency of Murray promised to be a virtual sovereignty; and the old factions of Scotland woke again into life. The house of Hamilton, which stood next in succession to the throne, became the centre of a secret league which gathered to it the nobles and prelates who longed for the re-establishment of Catholicism, and who saw in Alva's triumph a pledge of their own. The regent's difficulties were doubled by the policy of Elizabeth. Her wrath at the revolt of subjects against their Queen, her anxiety that "by this example none of her own be encouraged," only grew with the

Langside

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1570.

disregard of her protests and threats. In spite of Cecil she refused to recognize Murray's government, renewed her demands for the Queen's release, and encouraged the Hamiltons in their designs of freeing her. She was in fact stirred by more fears than her dread of Calvinism and of Calvinistic liberty. Philip's triumph in the Netherlands and the presence of his army across the sea was filling the Catholics of the northern counties with new hopes, and scaring Elizabeth from any joint action with the Scotch Calvinists which might call the Spanish forces over sea. She even stooped to guard against any possible projects of Philip by fresh negotiations for a marriage with one of the Austrian archdukes. But the negotiations proved as fruitless as before, while Scotland moved boldly forward in its new career. A Parliament which assembled at the opening of 1568 confirmed the deposition of the Queen, and made Catholic worship punishable with the pain of death. The triumph of Calvinistic bigotry only hastened the outbreak which had long been preparing, and at the beginning of May an escape of Mary from her prison was a signal for civil war. Five days later six thousand men gathered round her at Hamilton, and Argyle joined the Catholic lords who rallied to her banner. The news found different welcomes at the English court. Elizabeth at once offered to arbitrate between Mary and her subjects. Cecil, on the other hand, pressed Murray to strike quick and hard. But the regent needed little pressing. Surprized as he was, Murray was quickly in arms; and cutting off Mary's force as it moved on Dumbarton, he brought it to battle at Langside on the Clyde on the thirteenth of May, and broke it in a panicstricken rout. Mary herself, after a fruitless effort to reach Dumbarton, fled southwards to find a refuge in Galloway. A ride of ninety miles brought her to the Solway, but she found her friends wavering in her support and ready to purchase pardon from Murray by surrendering her into the regent's hands. From that moment she aban-

doned all hope from Scotland. She believed that Elizabeth would in the interests of monarchy restore her to the throne; and changing her designs with the rapidity of genius, she pushed in a light boat across the Solway, and was safe before the evening fell in the castle of Carlisle.

Mary in England.

The presence of Alva in Flanders was a far less peril than the presence of Mary in Carlisle. To restore her, as she demanded, by force of arms was impossible. If Elizabeth was zealous for the cause of monarchy, she had no mind to crush the nobles who had given her security against her rival simply to seat that rival triumphantly on the throne. On the other hand to retain her in England was to furnish a centre for revolt. Mary herself indeed threatened that "if they kept her prisoner they should have enough to do with her." If the Queen would not aid in her restoration to the throne, she demanded a free passage to France. But compliance with such a request would have given the Guises a terrible weapon against Elizabeth and have ensured French intervention in Scotland. For a while Elizabeth hoped to bring Murray to receive Mary back peaceably as Queen. But the regent refused to sacrifice himself and the realm to Elizabeth's policy. When the Duke of Norfolk with other commissioners appeared at York to hold a formal enquiry into Mary's conduct with a view to her restoration, Murray openly charged the Queen with a share in the murder of her husband, and he produced letters from her to Bothwell, which if genuine substantiated the charge. Till Mary was cleared of guilt, Murray would hear nothing of her return, and Mary refused to submit to such a trial as would clear her. So eager however was Elizabeth to get rid of the pressing peril of her presence in England that Mary's refusal to submit to any trial only drove her to fresh devices for her restoration. She urged upon Murray the suppression of the graver charges, and upon Mary the leaving Murray in actual possession of the royal power as the price of her return. Neither however would listen to terms which

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1570.

sacrificed both to Elizabeth's self-interest. The Regent persisted in charging the Queen with murder and adultery. Mary refused either to answer or to abdicate in favour of her infant son.

Elizabeth's difficulties.

The triumph indeed of her bold policy was best advanced, as the Queen of Scots had no doubt foreseen, by simple inaction. Her misfortunes, her resolute denials, were gradually wiping away the stain of her guilt and winning back the Catholics of England to her cause. Already there were plans for her marriage with Norfolk, the head of the English nobles, as for her marriage with the heir of the Hamiltons. The first match might give her the English crown, the second could hardly fail to restore her to the crown of Scotland. In any case her presence, rousing as it did fresh hopes of a Catholic reaction, put pressure on her sister Queen. Elizabeth "had the wolf by the ears," while the fierce contest which Alva's presence roused in France and in the Netherlands was firing the temper of the two great parties in England. In the Court, as in the country, the forces of progress and of resistance stood at last in sharp and declared opposition to each other. Cecil at the head of the Protestants demanded a general alliance with the Protestant churches throughout Europe, a war in the Low Countries against Alva, and the unconditional surrender of Mary to her Scotch subjects for the punishment she deserved. The Catholics on the other hand, backed by the mass of the Conservative party with the Duke of Norfolk at its head, and supported by the wealthier merchants who dreaded the ruin of the Flemish trade, were as earnest in demanding the dismissal of Cecil and the Protestants from the council-board, a steady peace with Spain, and, though less openly, a recognition of Mary's succession. Elizabeth was driven to temporize as before. She refused Cecil's counsels; but she sent money and arms to Condé, and hampered Alva by seizing treasure on its way to him, and by pushing the quarrel even to a temporary embargo on shipping either side the sea.

She refused the counsels of Norfolk; but she would hear nothing of a declaration of war, or give any judgement on the charges against the Scottish Queen, or recognize the accession of James in her stead.

Norfolk.

But to the pressure of Alva and Mary was now added the pressure of Rome. With the triumph of Philip in the Netherlands and of the Guises in France Pius the Fifth held that the time had come for a decisive attack on Elizabeth. If Philip held back from playing the champion of Catholicism, if even the insults to Alva failed to stir him to active hostility, Rome could still turn to its adherents within the realm. Pius had already sent two envoys in 1567 with powers to absolve the English Catholics who had attended church from their schism, but to withdraw all hope of future absolution for those who continued to conform. The result of their mission however had been so small that it was necessary to go further. The triumph of Alva in the Netherlands, the failure of the Prince of Orange in an attempt to rescue them from the Spanish army, the terror-struck rising of the French Huguenots, the growing embarrassments of Elizabeth both at home and abroad, seemed to offer Rome its opportunity of delivering a final blow. In February, 1569, the Queen was declared a heretic by a Bull which asserted in their strongest form the Papal claims to a temporal supremacy over princes. As a heretic and excommunicate, she was "deprived of her pretended right to the said kingdom," her subjects were absolved from allegiance to her, commanded "not to dare to obey her," and anathematized if they did obey. The Bull was not as yet promulgated, but Dr. Morton was sent into England to denounce the Queen as fallen from her usurped authority, and to promise the speedy issue of the sentence of deposition. The religious pressure was backed by political intrigue. Ridolfi, an Italian merchant settled in London, who had received full powers and money from Rome, knit the threads of a Catholic revolt in the north, and drew the Duke of Norfolk into

CHAP. V. — England and the Papacy. — 1567-1570.

correspondence with Mary Stuart. The Duke was the son of Lord Surrey and grandson of the Norfolk who had headed the Conservative party through the reign of Henry the Eighth. Like the rest of the English peers, he had acquiesced in the religious compromise of the Queen. It was as a Protestant that the more Conservative among his fellow nobles now supported a project for his union with the Scottish Queen. With an English and Protestant husband it was thought that Murray and the lords might safely take back Mary to the Scottish throne, and England again accept her as the successor to her crown. But Norfolk was not contented with a single game. From the Pope and Philip he sought aid in his marriage-plot as a Catholic at heart, whose success would bring about a restoration of Catholicism throughout the realm. With the Catholic lords he plotted the overthrow of Cecil and the renewal of friendship with Spain. To carry out schemes such as these however required a temper of subtler and bolder stamp than the Duke's: Cecil found it easy by playing on his greed to part him from his fellow nobles; his marriage with Mary as a Protestant was set aside by Murray's refusal to accept her as Queen; and Norfolk promised to enter into no correspondence with Mary Stuart but with Elizabeth's sanction.

The Catholic Earls.

The hope of a crown, whether in Scotland or at home, proved too great however for his good faith, and Norfolk was soon wrapped anew in the net of papal intrigue. But it was not so much on Norfolk that Rome counted as on the nobles of the North. The three great houses of the northern border—the Cliffords of Cumberland, the Nevilles of Westmoreland, the Percies of Northumberland—had remained Catholics at heart; and from the moment of Mary's entrance into England they had been only waiting for a signal of revolt. They looked for foreign aid, and foreign aid now seemed assured. In spite of Elizabeth's help the civil war in France went steadily against the Huguenots. In March 1569 their army was routed at Jarnac,

and their leader, Condé, left dead on the field. The joy with which the victory was greeted by the English Catholics sprang from a consciousness that the victors looked on it as a prelude to their attack on Protestantism across the sea. No sooner indeed was this triumph won than Mary's uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, as the head of the house of Guise, proposed to Philip to complete the victory of Catholicism by uniting the forces of France and Spain against Elizabeth. The moment was one of peril such as England had never known. Norfolk was still pressing forward to a marriage with Mary; he was backed by the second great Conservative peer, Lord Arundel, and supported by a large part of the nobles. The Northern Earls with Lords Montague and Lumley and the head of the great house of Dacres were ready to take up arms, and sure—as they believed—of the aid of the Earls of Derby and Shrewsbury. Both parties of plotters sought Philip's sanction and placed themselves at his disposal. A descent of French and Spanish troops would have called both to the field. But much as Philip longed for a triumph of religion he had no mind for a triumph of France. France now meant the Guises, and to set their niece Mary Stuart on the English throne was to ensure the close union of England and the France they ruled. Though he suffered Alva therefore to plan the despatch of a force from the Netherlands should a Catholic revolt prove successful, he refused to join in a French attack.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1572.

The revolt of the Earls.

But the Papal exhortations and the victories of the Guises did their work without Philip's aid. The conspirators of the north only waited for Norfolk's word to rise in arms. But the Duke dissembled and delayed, while Elizabeth, roused at last to her danger, struck quick and hard. Mary Stuart was given in charge to the Puritan Lord Huntingdon. The Earls of Arundel and Pembroke, with Lord Lumley, were secured. Norfolk himself, summoned peremptorily to court, dared not disobey; and found himself at the opening of October a prisoner in the Tower.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

The more dangerous plot was foiled, for whatever were Norfolk's own designs, most of his Conservative partizans were good Protestants, and their aim of securing the succession by a Protestant marriage for Mary was one with which the bulk of the nation would have sympathized. But the Catholic plot remained; and in October the hopes of its leaders were stirred afresh by a new defeat of the Huguenots at Montcontour; while a Papal envoy, Dr. Morton, goaded them to action by news that a Bull of Deposition was ready at Rome. At last a summons to court tested the loyalty of the Earls, and on the tenth of November, 1569, Northumberland gave the signal for a rising. He was at once joined by the Earl of Westmoreland, and in a few days the Earls entered Durham and called the North to arms. They shrank from an open revolt against the Queen, and demanded only the dismissal of her ministers and the recognition of Mary's right of succession. But with these demands went a pledge to re-establish the Catholic religion. The Bible and Prayer-book were torn to pieces, and Mass said once more at the altar of Durham Cathedral, before the Earls pushed on to Doncaster with an army which soon swelled to thousands of men. Their cry was "to reduce all causes of religion to the old custom and usage;" and the Earl of Sussex, her general in the North, wrote frankly to Elizabeth that "there were not ten gentlemen in Yorkshire that did allow [approve] her proceedings in the cause of religion." But he was as loyal as he was frank, and held York stoutly while the Queen ordered Mary's hasty removal to a new prison at Coventry. The storm however broke as rapidly as it had gathered. Leonard Dacres held aloof. Lord Derby proved loyal. The Catholic lords of the south refused to stir without help from Spain. The mass of the Catholics throughout the country made no sign; and the Earls no sooner halted irresolute in presence of this unexpected inaction than their army caught the panic and dispersed. Northumberland and Westmoreland fled in the middle of December,

and were followed in their flight by Leonard Dacres of Naworth, while their miserable adherents paid for their disloyalty in bloodshed and ruin.

CHAP. V.
England and the Papacy.
1567-1578.

The ruthless measures of repression which followed this revolt were the first breach in the clemency of Elizabeth's rule. But they were signs of terror which were not lost on her opponents. It was the general inaction of the Catholics which had foiled the hopes of the northern Earls; and Pope Pius resolved to stir them to activity by publishing in March, 1570, the Bull of Excommunication and Deposition which had been secretly issued in the preceding year. In his Bull Pius declared that Elizabeth had forfeited all right to the throne, released her subjects from their oath of allegiance to her, and forbade her nobles and people to obey her on pain of excommunication. In spite of the efforts of the Government to prevent the entry of any copies of this sentence into the realm the Bull was found nailed in a spirit of ironical defiance on the Bishop of London's door. Its effect was far from being what Rome desired. With the exception of one or two zealots the English Catholics treated the Bull as a dead letter. The duty of obeying the Queen seemed a certain thing to them, while that of obeying the Pope in temporal matters was denied by most and doubted by all. Its spiritual effect indeed was greater. The Bull dealt a severe blow to the religious truce which Elizabeth had secured. In the North the Catholics withdrew stubbornly from the national worship, and everywhere throughout the realm an increase in the number of recusants showed the obedience of a large body of Englishmen to the Papal command. To the minds of English statesmen such an obedience to the Papal bidding in matters of religion only heralded an obedience to the Papal bidding in matters of state. In issuing the Bull of Deposition Pius had declared war upon the Queen. He had threatened her throne. He had called on her subjects to revolt. If his secret pressure had stirred the rising of the Northern Earls, his open

The Bull of Deposition.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1578.

declaration of war might well rouse a general insurrection of Catholics throughout the realm, while the plots of his agents threatened the Queen's life.

The Ridolfi plot.

How real was the last danger was shown at this moment by the murder of Murray. In January 1570 a Catholic partizan, James Hamilton, shot the Regent in the streets of Linlithgow; and Scotland plunged at once into war between the adherents of Mary and those of her son. The blow broke Elizabeth's hold on Scotland at a moment when conspiracy threatened her hold on England itself. The defeat of the Earls had done little to check the hopes of the Roman court. Its intrigues were busier than ever. At the close of the rising Norfolk was released from the Tower, but he was no sooner free than he renewed his correspondence with the Scottish Queen. Mary consented to wed him, and the Duke, who still professed himself a Protestant, trusted to carry the bulk of the English nobles with him in pressing a marriage which seemed to take Mary out of the hands of French and Catholic intriguers, to make her an Englishwoman, and to settle the vexed question of the succession to the throne. But it was only to secure this general adhesion that Norfolk delayed to declare himself a Catholic. He sought the Pope's approval of his plans, and appealed to Philip for the intervention of a Spanish army. At the head of this appeal stood the name of Mary; while Norfolk's name was followed by those of many lords of "the old blood," as the prouder peers styled themselves. The significance of the request was heightened by gatherings of Catholic refugees at Antwerp in the heart of Philip's dominions in the Low Countries round the fugitive leaders of the Northern Revolt. The intervention of the Pope was brought to quicken Philip's slow designs. Ridolfi, as the agent of the conspirators, appeared at Rome and laid before Pius their plans for the marriage of Norfolk and Mary, the union of both realms under the Duke and the Scottish Queen, and the seizure of Elizabeth and her

CHAP. V.

England and the Papacy.

1567–1570.

Norfolk's death.

counsellors at one of the royal country houses. Pius backed the project with his warm approval, and Ridolfi hurried to secure the needful aid from Philip of Spain.

Enough of these conspiracies was discovered to rouse a fresh ardour in the menaced Protestants. While Ridolfi was negotiating at Rome and Madrid, the Parliament met to pass an act of attainder against the Northern Earls, and to declare the introduction of Papal Bulls into the country an act of high treason. It was made treason to call the Queen heretic or schismatic, or to deny her right to the throne. The rising indignation against Mary, as "the daughter of Debate, who discord fell doth sow," was shown in a statute, which declared any person who laid claim to the Crown during the Queen's lifetime incapable of ever succeeding to it. The disaffection of the Catholics was met by imposing on all magistrates and public officers the obligation of subscribing to the Articles of Faith, a measure which in fact transferred the administration of justice and public order to their Protestant opponents, by forbidding conversions to Catholicism or the bringing into England of Papal absolutions or objects consecrated by the Pope. Meanwhile Ridolfi was struggling in vain against Philip's caution. The King made no objection to the seizure or assassination of Elizabeth. The scheme secured his fullest sympathy; no such opportunity, he held, would ever offer again; and he longed to finish the affair quickly before France should take part in it. But he could not be brought to send troops to England before Elizabeth was secured. If troops were once sent, the failure of the plot would mean war with England; and with fresh troubles threatening Alva's hold on the Netherlands Philip had no mind to risk an English war. Norfolk on the other hand had no mind to risk a rising before Spanish troops were landed, and Ridolfi's efforts failed to bring either Duke or King to action. But the clue to these negotiations had long been in Cecil's hands; and at the opening of 1571 Norfolk's

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

schemes of ambition were foiled by his arrest. He was convicted of treason, and after a few months' delay executed at the Tower.

Elizabeth and England.

With the death of Norfolk and that of Northumberland, who followed him to the scaffold, the dread of revolt within the realm which had so long hung over England passed quietly away. The failure of the two attempts not only showed the weakness and disunion of the party of discontent and reaction, but it revealed the weakness of all party feeling before the rise of a national temper which was springing naturally out of the peace of Elizabeth's reign, and which a growing sense of danger to the order and prosperity around it was fast turning into a passionate loyalty to the Queen. It was not merely against Cecil's watchfulness or Elizabeth's cunning that Mary and Philip and the Percies dashed themselves in vain; it was against a new England. And this England owed its existence to the Queen. "I have desired," Elizabeth said proudly to her Parliament, "to have the obedience of my subjects by love, and not by compulsion." Through the fourteen years which had passed since she mounted the throne, her subjects' love had been fairly won by justice and good government. The current of political events had drawn men's eyes chiefly to the outer dangers of the country, to the policy of Philip and of Rome, to the revolutions of France, to the pressure from Mary Stuart. No one had watched these outer dangers so closely as the Queen. But buried as she seemed in foreign negotiations and intrigues, Elizabeth was above all an English sovereign. She devoted herself ably and energetically to the task of civil administration. At the first moment of relief from the pressure of outer troubles, after the treaty of Edinburgh, she faced the two main causes of internal disorder. The debasement of the coinage was brought to an end in 1560. In 1561 a commission was issued to enquire into the best means of facing the problem of social pauperism.

The Poor

industry, were working quietly for the relief of the glutted labour market; but a vast mass of disorder still existed in England, which found a constant ground of resentment in the enclosures and evictions which accompanied the progress of agricultural change. It was on this host of "broken men" that every rebellion could count for support; their mere existence was an encouragement to civil war; while in peace their presence was felt in the insecurity of life and property, in bands of marauders which held whole counties in terror, and in "sturdy beggars" who stripped travellers on the road. Under Elizabeth as under her predecessors the terrible measures of repression, whose uselessness More had in vain pointed out, went pitilessly on. We find the magistrates of Somersetshire capturing a gang of a hundred at a stroke, hanging fifty at once on the gallows, and complaining bitterly to the Council of the necessity for waiting till the Assizes before they could enjoy the spectacle of the fifty others hanging beside them. But the Government were dealing with the difficulty in a wiser and more effectual way. The old powers to enforce labour on the idle and settlement on the vagrant class which had been given by statutes of Henry the Eighth were continued; and each town and parish was held responsible for the relief of its indigent and disabled poor, as well as for the employment of able-bodied mendicants. But a more efficient machinery was gradually devized for carrying out the relief and employment of the poor. Funds for this purpose had been provided by the collection of alms in church; but by an Act of 1562 the mayor of each town and the churchwardens of each country parish were directed to draw up lists of all inhabitants able to contribute to such a fund, and on a persistent refusal the justices in sessions were empowered to assess the offender at a fitting sum and to enforce its payment by imprisonment.

The principles embodied in these measures, that of

AP. V. [illegible]

local responsibility for local distress, and that of a distinction between the pauper and the vagabond, were more clearly defined in a statute of 1572. By this Act the justices in the country districts and mayors and other officers in towns were directed to register the impotent poor, to settle them in fitting habitations and to assess all inhabitants for their support. Overseers were appointed to enforce and superintend their labour, for which wool, hemp, flax, or other stuff was to be provided at the expense of the inhabitants; and houses of correction were established in every county for obstinate vagabonds or for paupers refusing to work at the overseer's bidding. A subsequent Act transferred to these overseers the collection of the poor rate, and powers were given to bind poor children as apprentices, to erect buildings for the improvident poor, and to force the parents and children of such paupers to maintain them. The well-known Act which matured and finally established this system, the 43rd of Elizabeth, remained the base of our system of pauper-administration until a time within the recollection of living men. Whatever flaws a later experience has found in these measures, their wise and humane character formed a striking contrast to the legislation which had degraded our statute-book from the date of the Statute of Labourers; and their efficacy at the time was proved by the cessation of the social danger against which they were intended to provide.

noth of ealth.

Its cessation however was owing, not merely to law, but to the natural growth of wealth and industry throughout the country. A middle class of wealthier landowners and merchants was fast rising into importance. "The wealth of the meaner sort," wrote one to Cecil, "is the very fount of rebellion, the occasion of their indolence, of the contempt of the nobility, and of the hatred they have conceived against them." But Cecil and his mistress could watch the upgrowth of national wealth with cooler eyes. In the country its effect was to undo much of the evil

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. [illegible]–1576.

which the diminution of small holdings had done. Whatever social embarrassment it might bring about, the revolution in agriculture which Latimer deplored undoubtedly favoured production. Not only was a larger capital brought to bear upon the land, but the mere change in the system of cultivation introduced a taste for new and better modes of farming; the breed of horses and of cattle was improved, and a far greater use made of manure and dressings. One acre under the new system produced, it was said, as much as two under the old. As a more careful and constant cultivation was introduced, a greater number of hands came to be required on every farm; and much of the surplus labour which had been flung off the land in the commencement of the new system was thus recalled to it.

Growth of manufactures.

A yet more efficient agency in absorbing the unemployed was found in the developement of manufactures. The linen trade was as yet of small value, and that of silk-weaving was only just introduced. But the woollen manufacture was fast becoming an important element in the national wealth. England no longer sent her fleeces to be woven in Flanders and to be dyed at Florence. The spinning of yarn, the weaving, fulling, and dyeing of cloth, were spreading rapidly from the towns over the country-side. The worsted trade, of which Norwich was the centre, extended over the whole of the Eastern counties. Farmers' wives began everywhere to spin their wool from their own sheeps' backs into a coarse "home-spun." The South and the West however still remained the great seats of industry and of wealth, for they were the homes of mining and manufacturing activity. The iron manufactures were limited to Kent and Sussex, though their prosperity in this quarter was already threatened by the growing scarcity of the wood which fed their furnaces, and by the exhaustion of the forests of the Weald. Cornwall was then, as now, the sole exporter of tin; and the exportation of its copper was just beginning. The broadcloths of the

IAP. V.

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567-
576.

West claimed the palm among the woollen stuffs of England. The Cinque Ports held almost a monopoly of the commerce of the Channel. Every little harbour from the Foreland to the Land's End sent out its fleets of fishing boats, manned with bold seamen who were to furnish crews for Drake and the Buccaneers. Northern England still lagged far behind the rest of the realm in its industrial activity. But in the reign of Elizabeth the poverty and inaction to which it had been doomed for so many centuries began at last to be broken. We see the first sign of the revolution which has transferred English manufactures and English wealth to the north of the Mersey and of the Humber in the mention which now meets us of the friezes of Manchester, the coverlets of York, the cutlery of Sheffield, and the cloth-trade of Halifax.

rowth of
mmerce

The growth however of English commerce far outstripped as yet that of its manufactures. We must not judge of it by any modern standard; for the whole population of the country can hardly have exceeded five or six millions, and the burthen of all the vessels engaged in ordinary commerce was estimated at little more than fifty thousand tons. The size of the vessels employed in it would nowadays seem insignificant; a modern collier brig is probably as large as the biggest merchant vessel which then sailed from the port of London. But it was under Elizabeth that English commerce began the rapid career of developement which has made us the carriers of the world. The foundation of the Royal Exchange at London by Sir Thomas Gresham in 1566 was a mark of the commercial progress of the time. By far the most important branch of our trade was the commerce with Flanders. Antwerp and Bruges were in fact the general marts of the world in the early part of the sixteenth century, and the annual export of English wool and drapery to their markets was estimated at a sum of more than two millions in value. But the religious troubles of the Netherlands were already scaring capital and industry from their older seats. As

England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

early as 1560 Philip's envoy reported to his master that "ten thousand of your Majesty's servants in the Low Countries are already in England with their preachers and ministers." Alva's severities soon raised the number of refugees to fifty thousand; and the outbreak of war which followed drove trade as well as traders from the Low Countries. It was with the ruin of Antwerp at the time of its siege and capture by the Duke of Parma that the commercial supremacy of our own capital was first established. A third of the merchants and manufacturers of the ruined city are said to have found a refuge on the banks of the Thames. The export trade to Flanders died away as London developed into the general mart of Europe, where the gold and sugar of the New World were found side by side with the cotton of India, the silks of the East, and the woollen stuffs of England itself.

New trade-routes.

Not only was much of the world's older trade transferred by this change to English shores, but the burst of national vigour which characterized the time found new outlets for its activity. The fisheries grew more and more valuable. Those of the Channel and the German Ocean gave occupation to the ports which lined the coast from Yarmouth to Plymouth Haven; while Bristol and Chester were rivals in the fisheries of Ulster. The merchant-navy of England was fast widening its sphere of commerce. The Venetian carrying fleet still touched at Southampton; but as far back as the reign of Henry the Seventh a commercial treaty had been concluded with Florence, and the trade with the Mediterranean which began under Richard the Third constantly took a wider developement. The trade between England and the Baltic ports had hitherto been conducted by the Hanseatic merchants; but the extinction at this time of their London depot, the Steel Yard, was a sign that this trade too had now passed into English hands. The growth of Boston and Hull marked an increase of commercial intercourse with the Scandinavian states. The prosperity of Bristol, which

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1667-1678.

depended in great measure on the trade with Ireland, was stimulated by the conquest and colonization of that island at the close of the Queen's reign and the beginning of her successor's. The dream of a northern passage to India opened up a trade with a land as yet unknown. Of three ships which sailed in the reign of Mary under Hugh Willoughby to discover this passage, two were found frozen with their crews and their hapless commander on the coast of Lapland; but the third, under Richard Chancellor, made its way safely to the White Sea and by the discovery of Archangel created the trade with Russia. A more lucrative traffic had already begun with the coast of Guinea, to whose gold dust and ivory the merchants of Southampton owed their wealth. The guilt of the Slave Trade which sprang out of it rests with John Hawkins. In 1562 he returned from the African coast with a cargo of negroes; and the arms, whose grant rewarded this achievement (a demi-moor, proper, bound with a cord), commemorated his priority in the transport of slaves to the labour-fields of the New World. But the New World was already furnishing more honest sources of wealth. The voyage of Sebastian Cabot from Bristol to the mainland of North America had called English vessels to the stormy ocean of the North. From the time of Henry the Eighth the number of English boats engaged on the cod-banks of Newfoundland steadily increased, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the seamen of Biscay found English rivals in the whale-fishery of the Polar seas.

General comfort.

Elizabeth lent a ready patronage to the new commerce, she shared in its speculations, she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and she sanctioned the formation of the great Merchant Companies which could alone secure the trader against wrong or injustice in distant countries. The Merchant-Adventurers of London, a body which had existed long before, and had received a charter of incorporation under Henry the Seventh, furnished a model for the Russia Company and the

Company which absorbed the new commerce to the Indies. But it was not wholly with satisfaction that either the Queen or her ministers watched the social change which wealth was producing around them. They feared the increased expenditure and comfort which necessarily followed it, as likely to impoverish the land and to eat out the hardihood of the people. "England spendeth more on wines in one year," complained Cecil, "than it did in ancient times in four years." In the upper classes the lavishness of a new wealth combined with a lavishness of life, a love of beauty, of colour, of display, to revolutionize English dress. Men "wore a manor on their backs." The Queen's three thousand robes were rivalled in their bravery by the slashed velvets, the ruffs, the jewelled purpoints of the courtiers around her. But signs of the growing wealth were as evident in the lower class as in the higher. The disuse of salt-fish and the greater consumption of meat marked the improvement which had taken place among the country folk. Their rough and wattled farm houses were being superseded by dwellings of brick and stone. Pewter was replacing the wooden trenchers of the early yeomanry, and there were yeomen who could boast of a fair show of silver plate. It is from this period indeed that we can first date the rise of a conception which seems to us now a peculiarly English one, the conception of domestic comfort. The chimney-corner, so closely associated with family life, came into existence with the general introduction of chimneys, a feature rare in ordinary houses at the beginning of this reign. Pillows, which had before been despised by the farmer and the trader as fit only "for women in child-bed," were now in general use. Carpets superseded the filthy flooring of rushes. The loftier houses of the wealthier merchants, their parapeted fronts and costly wainscoting, their cumbrous but elaborate beds, their carved staircases, their quaintly figured gables, not only contrasted with the squalor which had till then characterized English towns,

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576. *Architectural change.*

but marked the rise of a new middle class which was to play its part in later history.

A transformation of an even more striking kind marked the extinction of the feudal character of the noblesse. Gloomy walls and serried battlements disappeared from the dwellings of the gentry. The strength of the mediæval fortress gave way to the pomp and grace of the Elizabethan Hall. Knole, Longleat, Burleigh and Hatfield, Hardwick and Audley End, are familiar instances of a social as well as an architectural change which covered England with buildings where the thought of defence was abandoned for that of domestic comfort and refinement. We still gaze with pleasure on their picturesque line of gables, their fretted fronts, their gilded turrets and fanciful vanes, their castellated gateways, the jutting oriels from which the great noble looked down on his new Italian garden, on its stately terraces and broad flights of steps, its vases and fountains, its quaint mazes, its formal walks, its lines of yews cut into grotesque shapes in hopeless rivalry of the cypress avenues of the South. Nor was the change less within than without. The life of the Middle Ages concentrated itself in the vast castle hall, where the baron looked from his upper dais on the retainers who gathered at his board. But the great households were fast breaking up; and the whole feudal economy disappeared when the lord of the household withdrew with his family into his "parlour" or "withdrawing-room" and left the hall to his dependants. The Italian refinement of life which told on pleasance and garden told on the remodelling of the house within, raised the principal apartments to an upper floor—a change to which we owe the grand staircases of the time—surrounded the quiet courts by long "galleries of the presence," crowned the rude hearth with huge chimney-pieces adorned with fauns and cupids, with quaintly interlaced monograms and fantastic arabesques, hung tapestries on the walls, and crowded each chamber with quaintly carved chairs and costly

CHAP. V.

England and the Papacy. 1567–1576.

cabinets. The prodigal use of glass became a marked feature in the domestic architecture of the time, and one whose influence on the general health of the people can hardly be over-rated. Long lines of windows stretched over the fronts of the new manor halls. Every merchant's house had its oriel. "You shall have sometimes," Lord Bacon grumbled, "your houses so full of glass, that we cannot tell where to come to be out of the sun or the cold."

Elizabeth and English order.

What Elizabeth contributed to this upgrowth of national prosperity was the peace and social order from which it sprang. While autos-de-fé were blazing at Rome and Madrid, while the Inquisition was driving the sober traders of the Netherlands to madness, while Scotland was tossing with religious strife, while the policy of Catharine secured for France but a brief respite from the horrors of civil war, England remained untroubled and at peace. Religious order was little disturbed. Recusants were few. There was little cry as yet for freedom of worship. Freedom of conscience was the right of every man. Persecution had ceased. It was only as the tale of a darker past that men recalled how ten years back heretics had been sent to the fire. Civil order was even more profound than religious order. The failure of the northern revolt proved the political tranquillity of the country. The social troubles from vagrancy and evictions were slowly passing away. Taxation was light. The country was firmly and steadily governed. The popular favour which had met Elizabeth at her accession was growing into a passionate devotion Of her faults indeed England beyond the circle of her court knew little or nothing. The shiftings of her diplomacy were never seen outside the royal closet. The nation at large could only judge her foreign policy by its main outlines, by its temperance and good sense, and above all by its success. But every Englishman was able to judge Elizabeth in her rule at home, in her love of peace, her instinct of order, the firmness and moderation of her

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

government, the judicious spirit of conciliation and compromise among warring factions which gave the country an unexampled tranquillity at a time when almost every other country in Europe was torn with civil war. Every sign of the growing prosperity, the sight of London as it became the mart of the world, of stately mansions as they rose on every manor, told, and justly told, in the Queen's favour. Her statue in the centre of the London Exchange was a tribute on the part of the merchant class to the interest with which she watched and shared personally in its enterprizes. Her thrift won a general gratitude. The memories of the Terror and of the Martyrs threw into bright relief the aversion from bloodshed which was conspicuous in her earlier reign, and never wholly wanting through its fiercer close. Above all there was a general confidence in her instinctive knowledge of the national temper. Her finger was always on the public pulse. She knew exactly when she could resist the feeling of her people, and when she must give way before the new sentiment of freedom which her policy unconsciously fostered. But when she retreated, her defeat had all the grace of victory; and the frankness and unreserve of her surrender won back at once the love that her resistance lost. Her attitude at home in fact was that of a woman whose pride in the well-being of her subjects and whose longing for their favour was the one warm touch in the coldness of her natural temper. If Elizabeth could be said to love anything, she loved England. "Nothing," she said to her first Parliament in words of unwonted fire, "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, is so dear to me as the love and goodwill of my subjects." And the love and goodwill which were so dear to her she fully won.

The religious truce.

It was this personal devotion that enabled Elizabeth to face the religious difficulties of her reign. Formidable as these had been from its outset, they were now growing into actual dangers. The attack of the Papacy from

CHAP. V.

England and the Papacy.

1567-1576

without had deepened the tide of religious fanaticism within. For the nation at large Elizabeth's system was no doubt a wise and healthy one. Single-handed, unsupported by any of the statesmen or divines about her, the Queen had forced on the warring religions a sort of armed truce. While the main principles of the Reformation were accepted the zeal of the ultra-reformers was held at bay. Outer conformity, attendance at the common prayer, was exacted from all, but changes in ritual which would have drawn attention to the change in religion were steadily resisted. The Bible was left open. Public discussion was unrestrained On the other hand the warfare of pulpit against pulpit was silenced by the licensing of preachers. In 1567 Elizabeth gave the Protestant zealots a rough proof that she would not suffer them to draw the Catholics into controversy and rouse the opposition to her system which controversy could not fail to bring with it. Parker's successor, Archbishop Grindal, who had been one of the Marian exiles and returned with much of the Calvinistic fanaticism, showed favour to a "liberty of prophesying" or preaching which would have flooded the realm with Protestant disputants. Elizabeth at once interposed. The "liberty of prophesying" was brought to an end; even the number of licensed preachers was curtailed; and the Primate himself was suspended from the exercize of his functions.

The religious change.

No stronger proof could have been given of the Queen's resolve to watch jealously over the religious peace of her realm. In her earlier years such a resolve went fairly with the general temper of the people at large. The mass of Englishmen remained true in sentiment to the older creed. But they conformed to the new worship. They shrank from any open defiance of the government. They shrank from reawakening the fierce strife of religions, of calling back the horsemen of Somerset or the fires of Mary. They saw little doctrinal difference between the new prayer and the old. Above all they trusted to patience. They had

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

seen too many religious revolutions to believe that any revolution would be lasting. They believed that the changes would be undone again as they had been undone before. They held that Elizabeth was only acting under pressure, and that her real inclination was towards the old religion. They trusted in Philip's influence, in an Austrian marriage, in the Queen's dread of a breach with the Papacy, in the pressure of Mary Stuart. And meanwhile the years went by, and as the memories of the past became dimmer, and custom laid a heavier and heavier hand on the mass of men, and a new generation grew up that had never known the spell of Catholicism, the nation drifted from its older tradition and became Protestant in its own despite

The Puritan pressure.

It was no doubt a sense that the religious truce was doing their work, as well as a dread of alienating the Queen and throwing her into the hands of their opponents by a more violent pressure, which brought the more zealous reformers to acquiesce through Elizabeth's earlier years in this system of compromise. But it was no sooner denounced by the Papacy than it was attacked by the Puritans. The rebellion of the Northern Earls, the withdrawal from the public worship, the Bull of Deposition, roused a fanatical zeal among the Calvinistic party which predominated in the Parliament of 1571. The movement in favour of a more pronounced Protestantism, of a more utter break with the Catholic past, which had slowly spread from the knot of exiles who returned to Geneva, now gathered a new strength; and a bill was brought in for the reform of the book of Common Prayer by the omission of the practices which displeased the Genevan party among the clergy. A yet closer approach to the theocratic system of Calvin was seen when the Lower House refused its assent to a statute that would have bound the clergy to subscribe to those articles which recognized the royal supremacy, the power of the Church to ordain rites and ceremonies, and the actual form of church government.

At such a crisis even the weightiest statesmen at Elizabeth's council-board believed that in the contest with Rome the Crown would have to rely on Protestant zeal, and the influence of Cecil and Walsingham backed the pressure of the Parliament. But the Queen was only stirred to a burst of anger; she ordered Strickland, who had introduced the bill for liturgical reform, to appear no more in Parliament, and though she withdrew the order as soon as she perceived the House was bent on his restoration, she would hear nothing of the changes on which the Commons were set.

Elizabeth's resistance.

Her resistance showed the sagacity with which the Queen caught the general temper of her people. The Catholic pressure had made it needful to exclude Catholics from the Commons and from the council-board, but a Protestant Council and a Protestant Parliament were by no means fair representatives of the general drift of English opinion. Her religious indifference left Elizabeth a better judge of the timid and hesitating advance of religious sentiment, of the stubborn clinging to the past, of the fear of change, of the dread of revolution, which made the winning of the people as a whole to the Reformation a slow and tedious process. The Protestants were increasing in number, but they were still a minority of the nation. The zealous Catholics, who withdrew from church at the Pope's bidding, were a still smaller minority. The bulk of Englishmen were striving to cling to their religious prejudice and to loyalty as well, to obey their conscience and their Queen at once, and in such a temper of men's minds any sudden and decisive change would have fallen like a thunderbolt. Elizabeth had no will to follow in the track of Rome, and to help the Pope to drive every waverer into action. Weakened and broken as it was, she clung obstinately to her system of compromise; and the general opinion gave her a strength which enabled her to resist the pressure of her council and her Parliament. So difficult however was her position that a change might

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576. Cartwright.

have been forced on her had she not been aided at this moment by a group of clerical bigots who gathered under the banner of Presbyterianism.

Of these Thomas Cartwright was the chief. He had studied at Geneva; he returned with a fanatical faith in Calvinism, and in the system of Church government which Calvin had devised; and as Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge he used to the full the opportunities which his chair gave him of propagating his opinions. No leader of a religious party ever deserved less of after sympathy. Cartwright was unquestionably learned and devout, but his bigotry was that of a mediæval inquisitor. The relics of the old ritual, the cross in baptism, the surplice, the giving of a ring in marriage, were to him not merely distasteful, as they were to the Puritans at large, they were idolatrous and the mark of the beast. His declamation against ceremonies and superstition however had little weight with Elizabeth or her Primates; what scared them was his reckless advocacy of a scheme of ecclesiastical government which placed the State beneath the feet of the Church. The absolute rule of bishops indeed Cartwright denounced as begotten of the devil; but the absolute rule of Presbyters he held to be established by the word of God. For the Church modelled after the fashion of Geneva he claimed an authority which surpassed the wildest dreams of the masters of the Vatican. All spiritual authority and jurisdiction, the decreeing of doctrine, the ordering of ceremonies, lay wholly in the hands of the ministers of the Church. To them belonged the supervision of public morals. In an ordered arrangement of classes and synods, these Presbyters were to govern their flocks, to regulate their own order, to decide in matters of faith, to administer "discipline." Their weapon was excommunication, and they were responsible for its use to none but Christ. The province of the civil ruler in such a system of religion as this was simply to carry out the decisions of

the Presbyters, "to see their decrees executed and to punish the contemners of them." Nor was this work of the civil power likely to be a light work. The spirit of Calvinistic Presbyterianism excluded all toleration of practice or belief. Not only was the rule of ministers to be established as the one legal form of Church government, but all other forms, Episcopalian and Separatist, were to be ruthlessly put down. For heresy there was the punishment of death. Never had the doctrine of persecution been urged with such a blind and reckless ferocity. "I deny," wrote Cartwright, "that upon repentance there ought to follow any pardon of death. . . . . Heretics ought to be put to death now. If this be bloody and extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost." The violence of language such as this was as unlikely as the dogmatism of his theological teaching to commend Cartwright's opinions to the mass of Englishmen. Popular as the Presbyterian system became in Scotland, it never took any popular hold on England. It remained to the last a clerical rather than a national creed, and even in the moment of its seeming triumph under the Commonwealth it was rejected by every part of England save London and Lancashire. But the bold challenge which Cartwright's party delivered to the Government in 1572 in an "admonition to the Parliament," which denounced the government of bishops as contrary to the word of God and demanded the establishment in its place of government by Presbyters, raised a panic among English statesmen and prelates which cut off all hopes of a quiet treatment of the merely ceremonial questions which really troubled the consciences of the more advanced Protestants. The natural progress of opinion abruptly ceased, and the moderate thinkers who had pressed for a change in ritual which would have satisfied the zeal of the reformers withdrew from union with a party which revived the worst pretensions of the Papacy.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567–1576.

Revolt of the Netherlands.

But the eyes of Elizabeth as of her subjects were

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

drawn from difficulties at home to the conflict which took fresh fire oversea. In Europe, as in England, the tide of religious passion which had so long been held in check was now breaking over the banks which restrained it; and with this outbreak of forces before which the diplomacy and intrigues of its statesmen fell powerless the political face of Europe was changed. In 1572 the power of the King of Spain had reached its height. The Netherlands were at his feet. In the East his trouble from the pressure of the Turks seemed brought to an end by a brilliant victory at Lepanto in which his fleet with those of Venice and the Pope annihilated the fleet of the Sultan. He could throw his whole weight upon the Calvinism of the West, and above all upon France, where the Guises were fast sinking into mere partizans of Spain. The common danger drew France and England together; and Catharine of Medicis strove to bind the two countries in one political action by offering to Elizabeth the hand of her son Henry, the Duke of Anjou. But at this moment of danger the whole situation was changed by the rising of the Netherlands. Driven to despair by the greed and persecution of Alva, the Low Countries rose in a revolt which after strange alternations of fortune gave to the world the Republic of the United Provinces. Of the Protestants driven out by the Duke's cruelties, many had taken to the seas and cruized as pirates in the Channel, making war on Spanish vessels under the flag of the Prince of Orange. Like the Huguenot privateers who had sailed under Condé's flag, these freebooters found shelter in the English ports. But in the spring of 1572 Alva demanded their expulsion; and Elizabeth, unable to resist, sent them orders to put to sea. The Duke's success proved fatal to his master's cause. The "water-beggars," a little band of some two hundred and fifty men, were driven by stress of weather into the Meuse. There they seized the city of Brill, and repulsed a Spanish force which strove to recapture it. The repulse was the signal for a general rising.

All the great cities of Holland and Zealand drove out their garrisons. The northern Provinces of Gelderland, Overyssel, and Friesland, followed their example, and by the summer half of the Low Countries were in revolt.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

A yet greater danger threatened Alva in the south, where Mons had been surprized by Lewis of Nassau, and where the Calvinists were crying for support from the Huguenots of France. The opening which their rising afforded was seized by the Huguenot leaders as a political engine to break the power which Catharine of Medicis exercized over Charles the Ninth, and to set aside her policy of religious balance by placing France at the head of Protestantism in the West. Weak and passionate in temper, jealous of the warlike fame which his brother, the Duke of Anjou, had won at Montcontour, dreading above all the power of Spain and eager to grasp the opportunity of breaking it by a seizure of the Netherlands, Charles listened to the counsels of Coligni, who pressed for war upon Philip and promised the support of the Huguenots in an invasion of the Low Countries. Never had a fairer prospect opened to French ambition. But Catharine had no mind to be set aside. To her cool political temper the supremacy of the Huguenots seemed as fatal to the Crown as the supremacy of the Catholics. A triumph of Calvinism in the Netherlands, wrought out by the swords of the French Calvinists, would decide not only the religious but the political destinies of France; and Catharine saw ruin for the monarchy in a France at once Protestant and free. She suddenly united with the Guises and suffered them to rouse the fanatical mob of Paris, while she won back the King by picturing the royal power as about to pass into the hands of Coligni. On the twenty-fourth of August, St. Bartholomew's day, the plot broke out in an awful massacre. At Paris the populace murdered Coligni and almost all the Huguenot leaders. A hundred thousand Protestants fell as the fury spread from town to town. In that awful hour Philip and Catholicism were saved.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1572.

The Spanish King laughed for joy. The new Pope, Gregory the Thirteenth, ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung. Instead of conquering the Netherlands France plunged madly back into a chaos of civil war, and the Low Countries were left to cope single-handed with the armies of Spain.

Elizabeth and the Netherlands.

They could look for no help from Elizabeth. Whatever enthusiasm the heroic struggle of the Prince of Orange for their liberties excited among her subjects, it failed to move Elizabeth even for an instant from the path of cold self-interest. To her the revolt of the Netherlands was simply "a bridle of Spain, which kept war out of our own gate." At the darkest moment of the contest, when Alva had won back all but Holland and Zealand and even William of Orange despaired, the Queen bent her energies to prevent him from finding succour in France. That the Low Countries could in the end withstand Philip, neither she nor any English statesmen believed. They held that the struggle must close either in their subjection to him, or in their selling themselves for aid to France; and the accession of power which either result must give to one of her two Catholic foes the Queen was eager to avert. Her plan for averting it was by forcing the Provinces to accept the terms which were now offered by Alva's successor, Requesens, a restoration of their constitutional privileges on condition of their submission to the Church. Peace on such a footing would not only restore English commerce, which suffered from the war; it would leave the Netherlands still formidable as a weapon against Philip. The freedom of the Provinces would be saved; and the religious question involved in a fresh submission to the yoke of Catholicism was one which Elizabeth was incapable of appreciating. To her the steady refusal of William the Silent to sacrifice his faith was as unintelligible as the steady bigotry of Philip in demanding such a sacrifice. It was of more immediate consequence that Philip's anxiety to avoid provoking an intervention on the part of England left Elizabeth tranquil at home. The policy of

CHAP. V.

England and the Papacy.

1567-1576.

Requesens after Alva's departure at the close of 1573 was a policy of pacification; and with the steady resistance of the Netherlands still foiling his efforts Philip saw that his one hope of success rested on the avoidance of intervention from without. The civil war which followed the massacre of St. Bartholomew removed all danger of such an intervention on the side of France. A weariness of religious strife enabled Catharine again to return to her policy of toleration in the summer of 1573; but though the death of Charles the Ninth and accession of his brother Henry the Third in the following year left the Queen-mother's power unbroken, the balance she preserved was too delicate to leave room for any schemes without the realm.

England becomes Protestant.

English intervention it was yet more needful to avoid; and the hopes of an attack upon England which Rome had drawn from Philip's fanaticism were thus utterly blasted. To the fiery exhortations of Gregory the Thirteenth the King only answered by counsels of delay. But Rome could not delay her efforts. All her hopes of recovering England lay in the Catholic sympathies of the mass of Englishmen, and every year that went by weakened her chance of victory. The firm refusal of Elizabeth to suffer the Puritans to break in with any violent changes on her ecclesiastical policy was justified by its slow but steady success. Silently, almost unconsciously, England became Protestant as the traditionary Catholicism which formed the religion of three-fourths of the people at the Queen's accession died quietly away. At the close of her reign the only parts of England where the old faith retained anything of its former vigour were the north and the extreme west, at that time the poorest and least populated parts of the kingdom. One main cause of the change lay in the gradual dying out or removal of the Catholic priesthood and the growth of a new Protestant clergy who supplied their place. The older parish priests, though they had almost to a man acquiesced in the changes of ritual and doctrine which the

CHAP. V. — England and the Papacy. — 1567-1576.

various phases of the Reformation imposed upon them, remained in heart utterly hostile to its spirit. As Mary had undone the changes of Edward, they hoped for a Catholic successor to undo the changes of Elizabeth; and in the meantime they were content to wear the surplice instead of the chasuble, and to use the Communion office instead of the Mass-book. But if they were forced to read the Homilies from the pulpit the spirit of their teaching remained unchanged; and it was easy for them to cast contempt on the new services, till they seemed to old-fashioned worshippers a mere "Christmas game." But the lapse of years did its work in emptying parsonage after parsonage. In 1579 the Queen felt strong enough to enforce for the first time a general compliance with the Act of Uniformity; and the jealous supervision of Parker and the bishops ensured an inner as well as an outer conformity to the established faith in the clergy who took the place of the dying priesthood. The new parsons were for the most part not merely Protestant in belief and teaching, but ultra-Protestant. The old restrictions on the use of the pulpit were silently removed as the need for them passed away, and the zeal of the young ministers showed itself in an assiduous preaching which moulded in their own fashion the religious ideas of the new generation. But their character had even a greater influence than their preaching. Under Henry the priests had in large part been ignorant and sensual men; and the character of the clergy appointed by the greedy Protestants under Edward or at the opening of Elizabeth's reign was even worse than that of their Catholic rivals. But the energy of the successive Primates, seconded as it was by the general increase of zeal and morality at the time, did its work; and by the close of the Queen's reign the moral temper as well as the social character of the clergy had greatly changed. Scholars like Hooker could now be found in the ranks of the priesthood, and the grosser scandals which disgraced the clergy as

a body for the most part disappeared. It was impossible for a Puritan libeller to bring against the ministers of Elizabeth's reign the charges of drunkenness and immorality which Protestant libellers had been able to bring against the priesthood of Henry's.

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1579.

Patriotism and Protestantism.

But the influence of the new clergy was backed by a general revolution in English thought. The grammar schools were diffusing a new knowledge and mental energy through the middle classes and among the country gentry. The tone of the Universities, no unfair test of the tone of the nation at large, changed wholly as the Queen's reign went on. At its opening Oxford was "a nest of Papists" and sent its best scholars to feed the Catholic seminaries. At its close the University was a hot-bed of Puritanism, where the fiercest tenets of Calvin reigned supreme. The movement was no doubt hastened by the political circumstances of the time. Under the rule of Elizabeth loyalty became more and more a passion among Englishmen; and the Bull of Deposition placed Rome in the forefront of Elizabeth's foes The conspiracies which festered around Mary were laid to the Pope's charge; he was known to be pressing on France and on Spain the invasion and conquest of the heretic kingdom; he was soon to bless the Armada. Every day made it harder for a Catholic to reconcile Catholicism with loyalty to his Queen or devotion to his country; and the mass of men, who are moved by a sentiment rather than by reason, swung slowly round to the side which, whatever its religious significance might be, was the side of patriotism, of liberty against tyranny, of England against Spain. A new impulse was given to this silent drift of religious opinion by the atrocities which marked the Catholic triumph on the other side of the Channel. The horror of Alva's butcheries or of the massacre in Paris on St. Bartholomew's day revived the memories of the bloodshed under Mary. The tale of Protestant sufferings was told with a wonderful pathos and picturesqueness

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

by John Foxe, an exile during the persecution; and his "Book of Martyrs," which was set up by royal order in the churches for public reading, passed from the churches to the shelves of every English household. The trading classes of the towns had been the first to embrace the doctrines of the Reformation, but their Protestantism became a passion as the refugees of the Continent brought to shop and market their tale of outrage and blood. Thousands of Flemish exiles found a refuge in the Cinque Ports, a third of the Antwerp merchants were seen pacing the new London Exchange, and a Church of French Huguenots found a home which it still retains in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral.

The Seminary Priests.

But the decay of Catholicism appealed strongly to the new spirit of Catholic zeal which, in its despair of aid from Catholic princes, was girding itself for its own bitter struggle with heresy. Pius the Fifth had now passed away, but the policy of the Papal court remained unchanged. His successor, Gregory the Thirteenth, showed the same restless zeal, the same world-wide energy in the work of winning back the nations to the Catholic Church. Rome was still the centre of the Catholic crusade. It wielded material as well as spiritual arms. If the Papacy had ceased to be a military power, it remained a financial power. Taxes were multiplied, expenses reduced, estates confiscated, free towns reduced to servitude, with the one aim of enabling Gregory and his successors to build up a vast system of loans which poured the wealth of Europe into the treasury of Catholicism. It was the treasure of the Vatican which financed the Catholic movement. Subsidies from the Papacy fitted out the fleet that faced the Turk at Lepanto, and gathered round the Guises their lance-knights from the Rhine. Papal supplies equipped expeditions against Ireland, and helped Philip to bear the cost of the Armada. It was the Papal exchequer which supported the world-wide diplomacy that was carrying on negotiations in Sweden and intrigues in

England and the Papacy. 1567-1578.

Poland, goading the lukewarm Emperor to action or quickening the sluggish movements of Spain, plotting the ruin of Geneva or the assassination of Orange, stirring up revolt in England and civil war in France. It was the Papacy that bore the cost of the religious propaganda that was fighting its stubborn battle with Calvinist and Lutheran on the Rhine and the Elbe, or sending its missionaries to win back the lost isle of the west. As early as 1568 Dr. Allen, a scholar who had been driven from Oxford by the test prescribed in the Act of Uniformity, had foreseen the results of the dying out of the Marian priests, and had set up a seminary at Douay to supply their place. The new college was liberally supported by the Catholic peers, and supplied with pupils by a stream of refugees from Oxford and the English grammar schools. Three years after its opening the college numbered a hundred and fifty members. It was in these "seminary priests" that Gregory the Thirteenth saw the means of reviving Catholic zeal in England, and at the Pope's bidding they began in 1576 to pass over to English shores.

The English Panic.

Few as the new comers were at first, their presence was at once felt in the check which it gave to the gradual reconciliation of the Catholic gentry to the English Church. No check could have been more galling to Elizabeth, and her resentment was quickened by the sense of danger. Rome had set itself in the forefront of her foes. She had accepted the issue of the Bull of Deposition as a declaration of war on the part of the Papacy, and she viewed the Douay priests with some justice as its political emissaries. The comparative security of the Catholics from active persecution during the early part of her reign had arisen, partly from the sympathy and connivance of the gentry who acted as justices of the peace, and still more from her own religious indifference. But the Test Act placed the magistracy in Protestant hands; and as Elizabeth passed from indifference to suspicion and from suspicion to terror she put less restraint on the bigotry

around her. In quitting Eaton Hall which she had visited in one of her pilgrimages the Queen gave its master, young Rookwood, thanks for his entertainment and her hand to kiss. "But my Lord Chamberlain nobly and gravely understanding that Rookwood was excommunicate" for non-attendance at church "called him before him, demanded of him how he durst presume to attempt her royal presence, he unfit to accompany any Christian person, forthwith said that he was fitter for a pair of stocks, commanded him out of Court, and yet to attend the Council's pleasure" The Council's pleasure was seen in his committal to the town prison at Norwich, while "seven more gentlemen of worship" were fortunate enough to escape with a simple sentence of arrest at their own homes. The Queen's terror became a panic in the nation at large. The few priests who landed from Douay were multiplied into an army of Papal emissaries despatched to sow treason and revolt throughout the land. Parliament, which the working of the Test Act had made a wholly Protestant body, save for the presence of a few Catholics among the peers, was summoned to meet the new danger, and declared by formal statute the landing of these priests and the harbouring of them to be treason. The Act proved no idle menace; and the execution of Cuthbert Mayne, a young priest who was arrested in Cornwall with the Papal Bull of Deposition hidden about him, gave a terrible indication of the character of the struggle upon which Elizabeth was about to enter.

Don John of Austria.

The execution of Cuthbert Mayne was far from being purposed as the opening of a religious persecution. To modern eyes there is something even more revolting than open persecution in a policy which branded every Catholic priest as a traitor and all Catholic worship as disloyalty; but the first step towards toleration was won when the Queen rested her system of repression on purely political grounds. If Elizabeth was a persecutor, she was the first English ruler who felt the charge of religious persecution to be a

England and the Papacy. 1567–1578.

stigma on her rule. Nor can it be denied that there was a real political danger in the new missionaries. Allen was a restless conspirator, and the work of his seminary priests was meant to aid a new plan of the Papacy for the conquest of England. In 1576, on the death of Requesens, the Spanish governor of the Low Countries, a successor was found for him in Don John of Austria, a natural brother of Philip, the victor of Lepanto, and the most famous general of his day. The temper of Don John was daring and ambitious; his aim was a crown; and he sought in the Netherlands the means of winning one. His ambition lent itself easily to the schemes of Mary Stuart and of Rome; and he resolved to bring about by quick concessions a settlement in the Low Countries, to cross with the Spanish forces employed there to England, to raise the Catholics in revolt, to free and marry Mary Stuart, and reign in her right as an English king. The plan was an able one; but it was foiled ere he reached his post. The Spanish troops had mutinied on the death of Requesens; and their sack of Antwerp drew the States of the Netherlands together in a "Pacification of Ghent." All differences of religion were set aside in a common purpose to drive out the stranger. Baffled as he was, the subtlety of Don John turned even this league to account. Their demand for the withdrawal of the Spanish troops, though fatal to Philip's interests in the Low Countries, could be made to serve the interests of Don John across the seas. In February, 1577, therefore he ratified the Pacification of Ghent, consented to the maintenance of the liberties of the States, and engaged to withdraw the army. He stipulated only for its withdrawal by sea, and for a delay of three months, which was needful for the arrangement of his descent on the English coast. Both demands however were refused; he was forced to withdraw his troops at once and by land, and the scheme of the Papacy found itself utterly foiled.

The Prince of Parma.

Secret as were the plans of Don John, Elizabeth had

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1578.

seen how near danger had drawn to her. Fortune again proved her friend, for the efforts of Don John to bring about a reconciliation of the Netherlands proved fruitless, and negotiations soon passed again into the clash of arms. But the Queen was warned at last. On the new outbreak of war in 1577 she allied herself with the States and sent them money and men. Such a step, though not in form an act of hostility against Philip, for the Provinces with which she leagued herself still owned themselves as Philip's subjects, was a measure which proved the Queen's sense of her need of the Netherlands. Though she had little sympathy with their effort for freedom, she saw in them "the one bridle to Spain to keep war out of our own gate." But she was to see the war drift nearer and nearer to her shores. Now that the Netherlands were all but lost Philip's slow stubborn temper strung itself to meet the greatness of the peril. The Spanish army was reinforced; and in January, 1578, it routed the army of the States on the field of Gemblours. The sickness and death of Don John arrested its progress for a few months; but his successor, Philip's nephew, Alexander Farnese, the Prince of Parma, soon proved his greatness whether as a statesman or a general. He seized on the difference of faith between the Catholic and Protestant States as a means of division. The Pacification of Ghent was broken at the opening of 1579 by the secession of the Walloon provinces of the southern border. It was only by a new league of the seven northern provinces where Protestantism was dominant, in the Union of Utrecht that William of Orange could meet Parma's stroke. But the general union of the Low Countries was fatally broken, and from this moment the ten Catholic states passed one by one into the hands of Spain.

The Papal attack.

The new vigour of Philip in the West marked a change in the whole policy of Spain. Till now, in spite of endless provocations, Philip had clung to the English alliance. Fear of Elizabeth's union with France, dread of her help to

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567–1578.

the Netherlands, had steeled him to bear patiently her defiance of his counsels, her neglect of his threats, her seizure of his treasure, her persecution of the Catholic party which looked to him as its head. But patience had only been met by fresh attacks. The attempt of Don John had spurred Elizabeth to ally herself to France. She was expected every hour to marry the Duke of Anjou. She had given friendship and aid to the revolted provinces. Above all her freebooters were carrying war into the far Pacific, and challenging the right of Spain to the New World of the West. Philip drifted whether he would or no into a position of hostility. He had not forbidden the projects of Don John; he at last promised aid to the projects of Rome. In 1579 the Papacy, planned the greatest and most comprehensive of its attacks upon Elizabeth. If the Catholic powers still hesitated and delayed, Rome was resolute to try its own strength in the West. The spiritual reconciliation of England was not enough. However successful the efforts of the seminary priests might prove they would leave Elizabeth on the throne, and the reign of Elizabeth was a defeat to the Papacy. In issuing its Bull of Deposition Rome had staked all on the ruin of the Queen, and even if England became Catholic Gregory could not suffer his spiritual subjects to obey a ruler whom his sentence had declared an unlawful possessor of the throne. And now that the temper of Spain promised more vigorous action Rome could pave the way for a landing of Philip's troops by stirring up a threefold danger for Elizabeth. While fresh and more vigorous missionaries egged on the English Catholics to revolt the Pope hastened to bring about a Catholic revolution in Scotland and a Catholic insurrection in Ireland.

Ireland.

In Ireland Sidney's victory had been followed by ten years of peace. Had the land been left to itself there would have been nothing more than the common feuds and disturbances of the time. The policy of driving its people to despair by seizing their lands for English

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1572-1576.

settlements had been abandoned since Mary's day. The religious question had hardly any practical existence. On the Queen's accession indeed the ecclesiastical policy of the Protestants had been revived in name; Rome was again renounced; the Act of Uniformity forced on the island the use of the English Prayer-book and compelled attendances at the services where it was used There was as before a general air of compliance with the law. Even in the districts without the Pale the bishops generally conformed; and the only exceptions of which we have any information were to be found in the extreme south and in the north, where resistance was distant enough to be safe. But the real cause of this apparent submission to the Act of Uniformity lay in the fact that it remained, and necessarily remained, a dead letter. It was impossible to find any considerable number of English ministers, or of Irish priests acquainted with English. Meath was one of the most civilized dioceses of the island, and out of a hundred curates in it hardly ten knew any tongue save their own. The promise that the service-book should be translated into Irish was never carried out, and the final clause of the Act itself authorized the use of a Latin rendering of it till further order could be taken. But this, like its other provisions, was ignored; and throughout Elizabeth's reign the gentry of the Pale went unquestioned to Mass There was in fact no religious persecution, and in the many complaints of Shane O'Neill we find no mention of a religious grievance

Ireland and the Papacy

But this was far from being the view of Rome or of Spain, of the Catholic missionaries, or of the Irish exiles abroad. They represented and perhaps believed the Irish people to be writhing under a religious oppression which it was burning to shake off They saw in the Irish loyalty to Catholicism a lever for overthrowing the heretic Queen. Stukely, an Irish refugee, had pressed on the Pope and Spain as early as 1571 the policy of a descent on Ireland; and though a force gathered in 1578 by

CHAP. V

England and the Papacy. 1567–1578.

the Pope for this purpose was diverted to a mad crusade against the Moors, his plans were carried out in 1579 by the landing of a few soldiers under the brother of the Earl of Desmond, James Fitzmaurice, on the coast of Kerry. The Irish however held aloof, and Fitzmaurice fell in a skirmish; but the revolt of the Earl of Desmond gave fresh hope of success, and the rising was backed by the arrival in 1580 of two thousand Papal soldiers "in five great ships." These mercenaries were headed by an Italian captain, San Giuseppe, and accompanied by a Papal Legate, the Jesuit Sanders, who brought plenary indulgence for all who joined the sacred enterprize and threats of damnation for all who resisted it. "What will you answer to the Pope's treatment," ran his letter to the Irish, "when he, bringing us the Pope's and other Catholic princes' aid, shall charge you with the crime and pain of heretics for maintaining an heretical pretensed Queen against the public sentence of Christ's vicar? Can she with her feigned supremacy absolve and acquit you from the Pope's excommunication and curse?" The news of the landing of this force stirred in England a Protestant frenzy that foiled the scheme for a Catholic marriage with the Duke of Anjou; while Elizabeth, panic-stricken, urged the French King to save her from Philip by an invasion of the Netherlands. But the danger passed quickly away. The Papal attempt ended in a miserable failure. The fort of Smerwick, in which the invaders entrenched themselves, was forced to surrender, and its garrison put ruthlessly to the sword. The Earl of Desmond, who after long indecision rose to support them, was defeated and hunted over his own country, which the panic-born cruelty of his pursuers harried into a wilderness.

The Jesuit landing.

Pitiless as it was, the work done in Munster spread a terror over Ireland which served England in good stead when the struggle of Catholicism culminated in the fight with the Armada; and not a chieftain stirred during that memorable year save to massacre the miserable men who were shipwrecked along the coast of Bantry or Sligo.

CHAP. V. — England and the Papacy. — 1567-1576. —

But the Irish revolt did much to give fresh strength to the panic which the efforts of the seminary priests had roused in England. This was raised to frenzy by news that to the efforts of the seminary priests were now added those of Jesuit missionaries. Pope Gregory had resolved to support his military effort in Ireland by a fresh missionary effort in England itself. Philip would only promise to invade England if the co-operation of its Catholics was secured; and the aim of the new mission was to prepare them for revolt. While the force of San Giuseppe was being equipped for Kerry a young convert, William Gilbert, was despatched to form a Catholic association in England; among whose members the chief were afterwards found engaged in conspiracies for the death of Elizabeth or sharing in the Gunpowder Plot. As soon as this was organized, as many as fifty priests, if we may trust Allen's statement, were sent to land secretly on the coast. They were headed by two men of remarkable talents and energy. A large number of the Oxford refugees at Douay had joined the Order of Jesus, whose members were already famous for their blind devotion to the will and judgements of Rome; and the two ablest and most eloquent of these exiles, Campian, once a fellow of St. John's, and Parsons, once a fellow of Balliol, were despatched in the spring of 1580 as the heads of a Jesuit mission in England. Their special aim was to win the nobility and gentry to the Church, and for the moment their success seemed overwhelming. "It is supposed," wrote Allen triumphantly, "that there are twenty thousand more Catholics this year than last." The eagerness shown to hear Campian was so great that in spite of the rewards offered for his arrest by the Government he was able to preach with hardly a show of concealment to a large audience at Smithfield. From London the Jesuits wandered in the disguise of captains or serving-men, sometimes even in the cassocks of the English clergy, through many of the counties; and wherever they went

the zeal of the Catholic gentry revived. The list of nobles won back to the older faith by these wandering apostles was headed by the name of Lord Oxford, Cecil's own son-in-law, and the proudest among English peers.

Their success in undoing the Queen's work of compromise was shown in a more public way by the growing withdrawal of the Catholics from attendance at the worship of the English Church. It was plain that a fierce religious struggle was at hand, and men felt that behind this lay a yet fiercer political struggle. Philip's hosts were looming over sea, and the horrors of foreign invasion seemed about to be added to the horrors of civil war. The panic of the Protestants and of the Parliament outran even the real greatness of the danger. The little group of missionaries was magnified by popular fancy into a host of disguised Jesuits; and the invasion of this imaginary host was met by the seizure and torture of as many priests as the government could lay hands on, the imprisonment of recusants, the securing of the prominent Catholics throughout the country, and by the assembling of Parliament at the opening of 1581. An Act "to retain the Queen's Majesty's subjects in due obedience" prohibited the saying of Mass even in private houses, increased the fine on recusants to twenty pounds a month, and enacted that "all persons pretending to any power of absolving subjects from their allegiance, or practising to withdraw them to the Romish religion, with all persons after the present session willingly so absolved or reconciled to the See of Rome, shall be guilty of High Treason." The way in which the vast powers conferred on the Crown by this statute were used by Elizabeth was not only characteristic in itself, but important as at once defining the policy to which, in theory at least, her successors adhered for more than a hundred years. No layman was brought to the bar or to the block under its provisions. The oppression of the Catholic gentry was limited to an exaction, more or less rigorous at different times, of the fines for recusancy

CHAP. V. England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.

or non-attendance at public worship. The work of bloodshed was reserved wholly for priests, and under Elizabeth this work was done with a ruthless energy which for the moment crushed the Catholic reaction. The Jesuits were tracked by pursuivants and spies, dragged from their hiding-places, and sent in batches to the Tower. So hot was the pursuit that Parsons was forced to fly across the Channel; while Campian was arrested in July 1581, brought a prisoner through the streets of London amidst the howling of the mob, and placed at the bar on the charge of treason. "Our religion only is our crime," was a plea which galled his judges; but the political danger of the Jesuit preaching was disclosed in his evasion of any direct reply when questioned as to his belief in the validity of the excommunication or deposition of the Queen by the Papal See, and after much hesitation he was executed as a traitor.

The Catholic resistance.

Rome was now at open war with England. Even the more conservative Englishmen looked on the Papacy as the first among England's foes. In striving to enforce the claims of its temporal supremacy, Rome had roused against it that national pride which had battled with it even in the middle ages. From that hour therefore the cause of Catholicism was lost. England became Protestant in heart and soul when Protestantism became identified with patriotism. But it was not to Protestantism only that this attitude of Rome and the policy it forced on the Government gave a new impulse. The death of Campian was the prelude to a steady, pitiless effort at the extermination of his class. If we adopt the Catholic estimate of the time, the twenty years which followed saw the execution of two hundred priests, while a yet greater number perished in the filthy and fever-stricken gaols into which they were plunged. The work of reconciliation to Rome was arrested by this ruthless energy; but, on the other hand, the work which the priests had effected could not be undone. The system of quiet compulsion and

conciliation to which Elizabeth had trusted for the religious reunion of her subjects was foiled; and the English Catholics, fined, imprisoned at every crisis of national danger, and deprived of their teachers by the prison and the gibbet, were severed more hopelessly than ever from the national Church. A fresh impulse was thus given to the growing current of opinion which was to bring England at last to recognize the right of every man to freedom both of conscience and of worship. "In Henry's days, the father of this Elizabeth," wrote a Catholic priest at this time, "the whole kingdom with all its bishops and learned men abjured their faith at one word of the tyrant. But now in his daughter's days boys and women boldly profess the faith before the judge, and refuse to make the slightest concession even at the threat of death." What Protestantism had first done under Mary, Catholicism was doing under Elizabeth. It was deepening the sense of personal religion. It was revealing in men who had till now cowered before the might of kingship a power greater than the might of kings. It was breaking the spell which the monarchy had laid on the imagination of the people. The Crown ceased to seem irresistible when "boys and women" dared to resist it: it lost its mysterious sacredness when half the nation looked on their sovereign as a heretic. The "divinity that doth hedge a king" was rudely broken in upon when Jesuit libellers were able to brand the wearer of the crown not only as a usurper but as a profligate and abandoned woman. The mighty impulse of patriotism, of national pride, which rallied the whole people round Elizabeth as the Armada threatened England or Drake threatened Spain, shielded indeed Elizabeth from much of the natural results of this drift of opinion. But with her death the new sentiment started suddenly to the front. The divine right of kings, the divine right of bishops, found themselves face to face with a passion for religious and political liberty which had gained vigour from the dungeon of the Catholic priest as from that of the Protestant zealot.

CHAPTER VI.

ENGLAND AND SPAIN.

1582—1593.

The popular passion. THE work of the Jesuits, the withdrawal of the Catholics from the Churches, the panic of the Protestants, were signs that the control of events was passing from the hands of statesmen and diplomatists. The long period of suspense which Elizabeth's policy had won was ending in the clash of national and political passions. The rising fanaticism of the Catholic world was breaking down the caution and hesitation of Philip; while England was setting aside the balanced neutrality of her Queen and pushing boldly forward to a contest which it felt to be inevitable. The public opinion, to which Elizabeth was so sensitive, took every day a bolder and more decided tone. Her cold indifference to the heroic struggle in Flanders was more than compensated by the enthusiasm it roused among the nation at large. The earlier Flemish refugees found a home in the Cinque Ports. The exiled merchants of Antwerp were welcomed by the merchants of London. While Elizabeth dribbled out her secret aid to the Prince of Orange, the London traders sent him half-a-million from their own purses, a sum equal to a year's revenue of the Crown. Volunteers stole across the Channel in increasing numbers to the aid of the Dutch, till the five hundred Englishmen who fought in the beginning of the struggle rose to a brigade of five thousand, whose bravery

turned one of the most critical battles of the war. Dutch privateers found shelter in English ports, and English vessels hoisted the flag of the States for a dash at the Spanish traders. Protestant fervour rose steadily among Englishmen as "the best captains and soldiers" returned from the campaigns in the Low Countries to tell of Alva's atrocities, or as privateers brought back tales of English seamen who had been seized in Spain and the New World, to linger amidst the tortures of the Inquisition, or to die in its fires. In the presence of this steady drift of popular passion the diplomacy of Elizabeth became of little moment. If the Queen was resolute for peace, England was resolute for war. A new daring had arisen since the beginning of her reign, when Cecil and Elizabeth stood alone in their belief in England's strength, and when the diplomatists of Europe regarded her obstinate defiance of Philip's counsels as "madness." The whole English people had caught the self-confidence and daring of their Queen.

CHAP. I. England and Spain 1588. 1588.

It was the instinct of liberty as well as of Protestantism that drove England forward to a conflict with Philip of Spain. Spain was at this moment the mightiest of European powers. The discoveries of Columbus had given it the New World of the West; the conquests of Cortes and Pizarro poured into its treasury the plunder of Mexico and Peru; its galleons brought the rich produce of the Indies, their gold, their jewels, their ingots of silver, to the harbour of Cadiz. To the New World the Spanish King added the fairest and wealthiest portions of the Old; he was master of Naples and Milan, the richest and most fertile districts of Italy; in spite of revolt he was still lord of the busy provinces of the Low Countries, of Flanders, the great manufacturing district of the time, and of Antwerp, which had become the central mart for the commerce of the world. His native kingdom, poor as it was, supplied him with the steadiest and the most daring soldiers that Europe had seen since the fall of the Roman Empire. The renown of the Spanish infantry had been growing from

Spain

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1582-1598.

the day when it flung off the onset of the French chivalry on the field of Ravenna; and the Spanish generals stood without rivals in their military skill, as they stood without rivals in their ruthless cruelty.

Philip.

The whole too of this enormous power was massed in the hands of a single man. Served as he was by able statesmen and subtle diplomatists, Philip of Spain was his own sole minister; labouring day after day, like a clerk, through the long years of his reign, amidst the papers which crowded his closet; but resolute to let nothing pass without his supervision, and to suffer nothing to be done save by his express command. His scheme of rule differed widely from that of his father. Charles had held the vast mass of his dominions by a purely personal bond. He chose no capital, but moved ceaselessly from land to land; he was a German in the Empire, a Spaniard in Castille, a Netherlander in the Netherlands. But in the hands of Philip his father's heritage became a Spanish realm. His capital was fixed at Madrid. The rest of his dominions sank into provinces of Spain, to be governed by Spanish viceroys, and subordinated to the policy and interests of a Spanish minister. All local liberties, all varieties of administration, all national differences were set aside for a monotonous despotism which was wielded by Philip himself It was his boast that everywhere in the vast compass of his dominions he was "an absolute king." It was to realize this idea of unshackled power that he crushed the liberties of Aragon, as his father had crushed the liberties of Castille, and sent Alva to tread under foot the constitutional freedom of the Low Countries. His bigotry went hand in hand with his thirst for rule. Catholicism was the one common bond that knit his realms together, and policy as well as religious faith made Philip the champion of Catholicism. Italy and Spain lay hushed beneath the terror of the Inquisition, while Flanders was being purged of heresy by the stake and the sword.

Philip and Elizabeth.

The shadow of this gigantic power fell like a deadly blight

CHAP. V — England and Spain. 1582-1588.

over Europe. The new Protestantism, like the new spirit of political liberty, saw its real foe in Philip. It was Spain, rather than the Guises, against which Coligni and the Huguenots struggled in vain; it was Spain with which William of Orange was wrestling for religious and civil freedom; it was Spain which was soon to plunge Germany into the chaos of the Thirty Years' War, and to which the Catholic world had for twenty years been looking, and looking in vain, for a victory over heresy in England. Vast in fact as Philip's resources were, they were drained by the yet vaster schemes of ambition into which his religion and his greed of power, as well as the wide distribution of his dominions, perpetually drew him. To coerce the weaker States of Italy, to command the Mediterranean, to keep a hold on the African coast, to preserve his influence in Germany, to support Catholicism in France, to crush heresy in Flanders, to despatch one Armada against the Turk and another against England, were aims mighty enough to exhaust even the power of the Spanish monarchy. But it was rather on the character of Philip than on the exhaustion of his treasury that Elizabeth counted for success in the struggle which had so long been going on between them. The King's temper was slow, cautious even to timidity, losing itself continually in delays, in hesitations, in anticipating remote perils, in waiting for distant chances; and on the slowness and hesitation of his temper his rival had been playing ever since she mounted the throne. The agility, the sudden changes of Elizabeth, her lies, her mystifications, though they failed to deceive Philip, puzzled and impeded his mind. The diplomatic contest between the two was like the fight which England was soon to see between the ponderous Spanish galleon and the light pinnace of the buccaneers.

Philip's policy.

But amidst all the cloud of intrigue which disguised their policy, the actual course of their relations had been clear and simple. In the earlier years of Elizabeth Philip had been driven to her alliance by his fear of France and his

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1588.

dread of the establishment of a French supremacy over England and Scotland through the accession of Mary Stuart. As time went on, the discontent and rising of the Netherlands made it of hardly less import to avoid a strife with the Queen. Had revolt in England prospered, or Mary Stuart succeeded in her countless plots, or Elizabeth fallen beneath an assassin's knife, Philip was ready to have struck in and reaped the fruits of other men's labours. But his stake was too vast to risk an attack while the Queen sate firmly on her throne; and the cry of the English Catholics, or the pressure of the Pope, failed to drive the Spanish King into strife with Elizabeth. But as the tide of religious passion which had so long been held in check broke over its banks the political face of Europe changed. Philip had less to dread from France or from an English alliance with France. The abstinence of Elizabeth from intervention in the Netherlands was neutralized by the intervention of the English people. Above all, the English hostility threatened Philip in a quarter where he was more sensitive than elsewhere, his dominion in the West.

Spain and the New World.

Foiled as the ambition of Charles the Fifth had been in the Old World, his empire had widened with every year in the New. At his accession to the throne the Spanish rule had hardly spread beyond the Island of St. Domingo, which Columbus had discovered twenty years before. But greed and enterprize drew Cortes to the mainland, and in 1521 his conquest of Mexico added a realm of gold to the dominions of the Emperor. Ten years later the great empire of Peru yielded to the arms of Pizarro. With the conquest of Chili the whole western coast of South America passed into the hands of Spain; and successive expeditions planted the Spanish flag at point upon point along the coast of the Atlantic from Florida to the river Plate. A Papal grant had conveyed the whole of America to the Spanish crown, and fortune seemed for long years to ratify the judgement of the Vatican. No European

nation save Portugal disputed the possession of the New World, and Portugal was too busy with its discoveries in Africa and India to claim more than the territory of Brazil. Though Francis the First sent seamen to explore the American coast, his ambition found other work at home; and a Huguenot colony which settled in Florida was cut to pieces by the Spaniards. Only in the far north did a few French settlers find rest beside the waters of the St. Lawrence. England had reached the mainland even earlier than Spain, for before Columbus touched its shores Sebastian Cabot, a seaman of Genoese blood but born and bred in England, sailed with an English crew from Bristol in 1497, and pushed along the coast of America to the south as far as Florida, and northward as high as Hudson's Bay. But no Englishman followed on the track of this bold adventurer; and while Spain built up her empire in the New World, the English seamen reaped a humbler harvest in the fisheries of Newfoundland.

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. [illegible]

The Sea-dogs.

There was little therefore in the circumstances which attended the first discovery of the western continent that promised well for freedom. Its one result as yet was to give an enormous impulse to the most bigoted and tyrannical among the powers of Europe, and to pour the gold of Mexico and Peru into the treasury of Spain. But as the reign of Elizabeth went on the thoughts of Englishmen turned again to the New World. A happy instinct drew them from the first not to the southern shores that Spain was conquering, but to the ruder and more barren districts of the north. In 1576 the dream of finding a passage to Asia by a voyage round the northern coast of the American continent drew a west-country seaman, Martin Frobisher, to the coast of Labrador; and, foiled as he was in his quest, the news he brought back of the existence of gold mines there set adventurers cruizing among the icebergs of Baffin's Bay. Elizabeth herself joined in the venture; but the settlement proved a failure, the ore which the ships brought back turned out to be

CHAP. VI. worthless, and England was saved from that greed of gold which was to be fatal to the energies of Spain. But failure as it was, Frobisher's venture had shown the readiness of Englishmen to defy the claims of Spain to the exclusive possession of America or the American seas. They were already defying these claims in a yet more galling way. The seamen of the southern and south-western coasts had long been carrying on a half-piratical war on their own account. Four years after Elizabeth's accession the Channel swarmed with "sea-dogs," as they were called, who sailed under letters of marque from Condé and the Huguenot leaders, and took heed neither of the complaints of the French Court nor of their own Queen's efforts at repression. Her efforts broke against the connivance of every man along the coast, of the very port officers of the Crown, who made profit out of the spoil which the plunderers brought home, and of the gentry of the west, whose love of venture made them go hand in hand with the sea-dogs. They broke above all against the national craving for open fight with Spain, and the Protestant craving for open fight with Catholicism. If the Queen held back from any formal part in the great war of religions across the Channel, her subjects were keen to take their part in it. Young Englishmen crossed the sea to serve under Condé or Henry of Navarre. The war in the Netherlands drew hundreds of Protestants to the field. Their passionate longing for a religious war found a wider sphere on the sea. When the suspension of the French contest forced the sea-dogs to haul down the Huguenot flag, they joined in the cruizes of the Dutch "sea-beggars." From plundering the vessels of Havre and Rochelle they turned to plunder the galleons of Spain.

England and Spain. 1580-1588.

Drake. Their outrages tried Philip's patience; but his slow resentment only quickened into angry alarm when the sea-dogs sailed westward to seek a richer spoil. The Papal decree which gave the New World to Spain, the threats of the Spanish King against any Protestant

who should visit its seas, fell idly on the ears of English seamen. Philip's care to save his new dominions from the touch of heresy was only equalled by his resolve to suffer no trade between them and other lands than Spain. But the sea-dogs were as ready to traffic as to fight. It was in vain that their vessels were seized, and the sailors flung into the dungeons of the Inquisition, "laden with irons, without sight of sun or moon." The profits of the trade were large enough to counteract its perils; and the bigotry of Philip was met by a bigotry as merciless as his own. The Puritanism of the sea-dogs went hand in hand with their love of adventure. To break through the Catholic monopoly of the New World, to kill Spaniards, to sell negroes, to sack gold-ships, were in these men's mind a seemly work for "the elect of God." The name of Francis Drake became the terror of the Spanish Indies. In Drake a Protestant fanaticism went hand in hand with a splendid daring. He conceived the design of penetrating into the Pacific, whose waters had till then never seen an English flag; and backed by a little company of adventurers, he set sail in 1577 for the southern seas in a vessel hardly as big as a Channel schooner, with a few yet smaller companions who fell away before the storms and perils of the voyage. But Drake with his one ship and eighty men held boldly on; and passing the Straits of Magellan, untraversed as yet by any Englishman, swept the unguarded coast of Chili and Peru, loaded his bark with the gold dust and silver ingots of Potosi, as well as with the pearls, emeralds, and diamonds which formed the cargo of the great galleon that sailed once a year from Lima to Cadiz. With spoils of above half-a-million in value the daring adventurer steered undauntedly for the Moluccas, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and in 1580, after completing the circuit of the globe, dropped anchor again in Plymouth harbour.

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

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Conquest of Portugal.

The romantic daring of Drake's voyage as well as the vastness of his spoil roused a general enthusiasm through-

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

[illegible]

out England. But the welcome which he received from Elizabeth on his return was accepted by Philip as an outrage which could only be expiated by war. Sluggish as it was, the blood of the Spanish King was fired at last by the defiance with which the Queen listened to all demands for redress. She met a request for Drake's surrender by knighting the freebooter and by wearing in her crown the jewels he offered her as a present. When the Spanish ambassador threatened that "matters would come to the cannon," she replied "quietly, in her most natural voice, as if she were telling a common story," wrote Mendoza, "that if I used threats of that kind she would fling me into a dungeon." Outraged indeed as Philip was, she believed that with the Netherlands still in revolt and France longing for her alliance to enable it to seize them, the King could not afford to quarrel with her. But the victories and diplomacy of Parma were already reassuring Philip in the Netherlands; while the alliance of Elizabeth with the revolted Provinces convinced him at last that their reduction could best be brought about by an invasion of England and the establishment of Mary Stuart on its throne. With this conviction he lent himself to the plans of Rome, and waited only for the rising in Ireland and the revolt of the English Catholics which Pope Gregory promised him to despatch forces from both Flanders and Spain. But the Irish rising was over before Philip could act; and before the Jesuits could rouse England to rebellion the Spanish King himself was drawn to a new scheme of ambition by the death of King Sebastian of Portugal in 1580. Philip claimed the Portuguese crown; and in less than two months Alva laid the kingdom at his feet. The conquest of Portugal was fatal to the Papal projects against England, for while the armies of Spain marched on Lisbon Elizabeth was able to throw the leaders of the expected revolt into prison and to send Campian to the scaffold. On the other hand it raised Philip into a far more formidable foe. The conquest

almost doubled his power. His gain was far more than that of Portugal itself. While Spain had been winning the New World her sister-kingdom had been winning a wide though scattered dominion on the African coast, the coast of India, and the islands of the Pacific. Less in extent, the Portuguese settlements were at the moment of even greater value to the mother country than the colonies of Spain. The gold of Guinea, the silks of Goa, the spices of the Philippines made Lisbon one of the marts of Europe. The sword of Alva had given Philip a hold on the richest trade of the world. It had given him the one navy that as yet rivalled his own. His flag claimed mastery in the Indian and the Pacific seas, as it claimed mastery in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

The marriage with Anjou.

The conquest of Portugal therefore wholly changed Philip's position. It not only doubled his power and resources, but it did this at a time when fortune seemed everywhere wavering to his side. The provinces of the Netherlands, which still maintained a struggle for their liberties, drew courage from despair; and met Philip's fresh hopes of their subjection by a solemn repudiation of his sovereignty in the summer of 1581. But they did not dream that they could stand alone, and they sought the aid of France by choosing as their new sovereign the Duke of Alençon, who on his brother Henry's accession to the throne had become Duke of Anjou. The choice was only part of a political scheme which was to bind the whole of Western Europe together against Spain. The conquest of Portugal had at once drawn France and England into close relations, and Catharine of Medicis strove to league the two countries by a marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou. Such a match would have been a purely political one, for Elizabeth was now forty-eight, and Francis of Anjou had no qualities either of mind or body to recommend him to the Queen. But the English ministers pressed for it, Elizabeth amidst all her coquetries seemed at last ready to marry, and the

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

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States seized the moment to lend themselves to the alliance of the two powers by choosing the Duke as their lord. Anjou accepted their offer, and crossing to the Netherlands, drove Parma from Cambray; then sailing again to England, he spent the winter in a fresh wooing.

Its failure.

But the Duke's wooing still proved fruitless. The schemes of diplomacy found themselves shattered against the religious enthusiasm of the time. While Orange and Catharine and Elizabeth saw only the political weight of the marriage as a check upon Philip, the sterner Protestants in England saw in it a victory for Catholicism at home. Of the difference between the bigoted Catholicism of Spain and the more tolerant Catholicism of the court of France such men recked nothing. The memory of St. Bartholomew's day hung around Catharine of Medicis; and the success of the Jesuits at this moment roused the dread of a general conspiracy against Protestantism. A Puritan lawyer named Stubbs only expressed the alarm of his fellows in his "Discovery of a Gaping Gulf" in which England was to plunge through the match with Anjou. When the hand of the pamphleteer was cut off as a penalty for his daring, Stubbs waved his hat with the hand that was left, and cried "God save Queen Elizabeth." But the Queen knew how stern a fanaticism went with this unflinching loyalty, and her dread of a religious conflict within her realm must have quickened the fears which the worthless temper of her wooer cannot but have inspired. She gave however no formal refusal of her hand. So long as coquetry sufficed to hold France and England together, she was ready to play the coquette; and it was as the future husband of the Queen that Anjou again appeared in 1582 in the Netherlands and received the formal submission of the revolted States, save Holland and Zealand. But the subtle schemes which centred in him broke down before the selfish perfidy of the Duke. Resolved to be ruler in more than name, he planned the seizure of the greater cities of the Nether-

lands, and at the opening of 1583 made a fruitless effort to take Antwerp by surprize. It was in vain that Orange strove by patient negotiation to break the blow. The Duke fled homewards, the match and sovereignty were at an end, the alliance of the three powers vanished like a dream. The last Catholic provinces passed over to Parma's side; the weakened Netherlands found themselves parted from France; and at the close of 1583 Elizabeth saw herself left face to face with Philip of Spain.

The Puritans and the Crown.

Nor was this all. At home as well as abroad troubles were thickening around the Queen. The fanaticism of the Catholic world without was stirring a Protestant fanaticism within the realm. As Rome became more and more the centre of hostility to England, patriotism itself stirred men to a hatred of Rome; and their hatred of Rome passed easily into a love for the fiercer and sterner Calvinism which looked on all compromise with Rome, or all acceptance of religious traditions or usages which had been associated with Rome, as treason against God. Puritanism, as this religious temper was called, was becoming the creed of every earnest Protestant throughout the realm; and the demand for a further advance towards the Calvinistic system and a more open breach with Catholicism which was embodied in the suppression of the "superstitious usages" became stronger than ever. But Elizabeth was firm as of old to make no advance. Greatly as the Protestants had grown, she knew they were still a minority in the realm. If the hotter Catholics were fast decreasing, they remained a large and important body. But the mass of the nation was neither Catholic nor Protestant. It had lost faith in the Papacy. It was slowly drifting to a new faith in the Bible. But it still clung obstinately to the past; it still recoiled from violent change; its temper was religious rather than theological, and it shrank from the fanaticism of Geneva as it shrank from the fanaticism of Rome. It was a proof of Elizabeth's genius that alone among her counsellors she understood this drift of

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain

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The High Commission.

opinion, and withstood measures which would have startled the mass of Englishmen into a new resistance.

But her policy was wider than her acts. The growing Puritanism of the clergy stirred her wrath above measure, and she met the growth of "nonconforming" ministers by conferring new powers in 1583 on the Ecclesiastical Commission. From being a temporary board which represented the Royal Supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, the Commission was now turned into a permanent body wielding the almost unlimited powers of the Crown. All opinions or acts contrary to the Statutes of Supremacy and Uniformity fell within its cognizance. A right of deprivation placed the clergy at its mercy. It had power to alter or amend the statutes of colleges or schools. Not only heresy and schism and nonconformity, but incest or aggravated adultery were held to fall within its scope; its means of enquiry were left without limit, and it might fine or imprison at its will. By the mere establishment of such a court half the work of the Reformation was undone. The large number of civilians on the board indeed seemed to furnish some security against the excess of ecclesiastical tyranny. Of its forty-four commissioners however few actually took any part in its proceedings; and the powers of the Commission were practically left in the hands of the successive Primates. No Archbishop of Canterbury since the days of Augustine had wielded an authority so vast, so utterly despotic, as that of Whitgift and Bancroft and Abbot and Laud. The most terrible feature of their spiritual tyranny was its wholly personal character. The old symbols of doctrine were gone, and the lawyers had not yet stepped in to protect the clergy by defining the exact limits of the new. The result was that at the commission-board at Lambeth the Primates created their own tests of doctrine with an utter indifference to those created by law. In one instance Parker deprived a vicar of his benefice for a denial of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Nor did

the successive Archbishops care greatly if the test was a varying or a conflicting one. Whitgift strove to force on the Church the Calvinistic supralapsarianism of his Lambeth Articles. Bancroft, who followed him, was as earnest in enforcing his anti-Calvinistic dogma of the divine right of the episcopate. Abbot had no mercy for Erastians. Laud had none for anti-Erastians. It is no wonder that the Ecclesiastical Commission, which these men represented, soon stank in the nostrils of the English clergy. Its establishment however marked the adoption of a more resolute policy on the part of the Crown, and its efforts were backed by stern measures of repression. All preaching or reading in private houses was forbidden; and in spite of the refusal of Parliament to enforce the requirement of them by law, subscription to the Three Articles was exacted from every member of the clergy. For the moment these measures were crowned with success. The movement which Cartwright still headed was checked; Cartwright himself was driven from his Professorship; and an outer uniformity of worship was more and more brought about by the steady pressure of the Commission. The old liberty which had been allowed in London and the other Protestant parts of the kingdom was no longer permitted to exist. The leading Puritan clergy, whose nonconformity had hitherto been winked at, were called upon to submit to the surplice, and to make the sign of the cross in baptism. The remonstrances of the country gentry availed as little as the protest of Lord Burleigh himself to protect two hundred of the best ministers from being driven from their parsonages on a refusal to subscribe to the Three Articles.

England and Spain. [illegible]

Martin Mar-prelate.

But the political danger of the course on which the Crown had entered was seen in the rise of a spirit of vigorous opposition, such as had not made its appearance since ~~since~~ the accession of the Tudors. The growing power of public opinion received a striking recognition in the struggle which bears the name of the "Martin Mar-

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1588.

prelate controversy." The Puritans had from the first appealed by their pamphlets from the Crown to the people, and Archbishop Whitgift bore witness to their influence on opinion by his efforts to gag the Press. The regulations made by the Star-Chamber in 1585 for this purpose are memorable as the first step in the long struggle of government after government to check the liberty of printing. The irregular censorship which had long existed was now finally organized. Printing was restricted to London and the two Universities, the number of printers was reduced, and all applicants for license to print were placed under the supervision of the Company of Stationers. Every publication too, great or small, had to receive the approbation of the Primate or the Bishop of London. The first result of this system of repression was the appearance, in the very year of the Armada, of a series of anonymous pamphlets bearing the significant name of "Martin Marprelate," and issued from a secret press which found refuge from the Royal pursuivants in the country-houses of the gentry. The press was at last seized; and the suspected authors of these scurrilous libels, Penry, a young Welshman, and a minister named Udall, died, the one in prison, the other on the scaffold. But the virulence and boldness of their language produced a powerful effect, for it was impossible under the system of Elizabeth to "mar" the bishops without attacking the Crown; and a new age of political liberty was felt to be at hand when Martin Marprelate forced the political and ecclesiastical measures of the Government into the arena of public discussion.

The gathering of the Armada.

The strife between Puritanism and the Crown was to grow into a fatal conflict, but at the moment the Queen's policy was in the main a wise one. It was no time for scaring and disuniting the mass of the people when the united energies of England might soon hardly suffice to withstand the onset of Spain. On the other hand, strike as she might at the Puritan party, it was bound to

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

1582–1588.

support Elizabeth in the coming struggle with Philip. For the sense of personal wrong and the outcry of the Catholic world against his selfish reluctance to avenge the blood of its martyrs had at last told on the Spanish King, and in 1584 the first vessels of an armada which was destined for the conquest of England began to gather in the Tagus. Resentment and fanaticism indeed were backed by a cool policy. The gain of the Portuguese dominions made it only the more needful for Philip to assert his mastery of the seas. He had now to shut Englishman and heretic not only out of the New World of the West but out of the lucrative traffic with the East. And every day showed a firmer resolve in Englishmen to claim the New World for their own. The plunder of Drake's memorable voyage had lured fresh freebooters to the "Spanish Main." The failure of Frobisher's quest for gold only drew the nobler spirits engaged in it to plans of colonization. North America, vexed by long winters and thinly peopled by warlike tribes of Indians, gave a rough welcome to the earlier colonists; and after a fruitless attempt to form a settlement on its shores Sir Humphry Gilbert, one of the noblest spirits of his time, turned homewards again to find his fate in the stormy seas "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land," were the famous words he was heard to utter ere the light of his little bark was lost for ever in the darkness of the night. But an expedition sent by his brother-in-law, Sir Walter Raleigh, explored Pamlico Sound; and the country they discovered, a country where in their poetic fancy "men lived after the manner of the Golden Age," received from Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, the name of Virginia.

Scotland and Philip.

It was in England only that Philip could maintain his exclusive right to the New World of the West; it was through England only that he could strike a last and fatal blow at the revolt of the Netherlands. And foiled as his plans had been as yet by the overthrow of the Papal schemes, even their ruin had left ground for hope in

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1598.

England itself. The tortures and hangings of the Catholic priests, the fining and imprisonment of the Catholic gentry, had roused a resentment which it was easy to mistake for disloyalty. The Jesuits with Parsons at their head pictured the English Catholics as only waiting to rise in rebellion at the call of Spain, and reported long lists of nobles and squires who would muster their tenants to join Parma's legions on their landing. A Spanish victory would be backed by insurrection in Ireland and attack from Scotland. For in Scotland the last act of the Papal conspiracy against Elizabeth was still being played. Though as yet under age, the young King, James the Sixth, had taken on himself the government of the realm, and had submitted to the guidance of a cousin, Esme Stuart, who had been brought up in France and returned to Scotland a Catholic and a fellow-plotter with the Guises He succeeded in bringing Morton to the block; and the death of the great Protestant leader left him free to enlist Scotland in the league which Rome was forming for the ruin of Elizabeth. The revolt in Ireland had failed. The work of the Jesuits in England had just ended in the death of Campian and the arrest of his followers But with the help of the Guises Scotland might yet be brought to rise in arms for the liberation of Mary Stuart, and James might reign as co-regent with his mother, if he were converted to the Catholic Church. The young King, anxious to free his crown from the dictation of the nobles, lent himself to his cousin's schemes. For the moment they were foiled. James was seized by the Protestant lords, and the Duke of Lennox, as Esme Stuart was now called, driven from the realm But James was soon free again, and again in correspondence with the Guises and with Philip. The young King was lured by promises of the hand of an arch-duchess and the hope of the crowns of both England and Scotland The real aim of the intriguers who guided him was to set him aside as soon as the victory was won and to restore his mother to

the throne. But whether Mary were restored or no it seemed certain that in any attack on Elizabeth Spain would find helpers from among the Scots. CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1582-1588.

Nor was the opportunity favourable in Scotland alone. In the Netherlands and in France all seemed to go well for Philip's schemes. From the moment of his arrival in the Low Countries the Prince of Parma had been steadily winning back what Alva had lost. The Union of Ghent had been broken. The ten Catholic provinces were being slowly brought anew under Spanish rule. Town after town was regained. From Brabant Parma had penetrated into Flanders; Ypres, Bruges, and Ghent had fallen into his hands. Philip dealt a more fatal blow at his rebellious subjects in the murder of the man who was the centre of their resistance. For years past William of Orange had been a mark for assassin after assassin in Philip's pay, and in 1584 the deadly persistence of the Spanish King was rewarded by his fall Reft indeed as they were of their leader, the Netherlanders still held their ground. The union of Utrecht stood intact; and Philip's work of reconquest might be checked at any moment by the intervention of England or of France. But at this moment all chance of French intervention passed away. Henry the Third was childless, and the death of his one remaining brother, Francis of Anjou, in 1584 left the young chief of the house of Bourbon, King Henry of Navarre, heir to the crown of France. Henry was the leader of the Huguenot party, and in January, 1585, the French Catholics bound themselves in a holy league to prevent such a triumph of heresy in the realm as the reign of a Protestant would bring about by securing the succession of Henry's uncle, the cardinal of Bourbon. The Leaguers looked to Philip for support; they owned his cause for their own; and pledged themselves not only to root out Protestantism in France, but to help the Spanish King in rooting it out throughout the Netherlands. The League at once overshadowed the Crown; and *The League.*

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1583-1603.

Henry the Third could only meet the blow by affecting to put himself at its head, and by revoking the edicts of toleration in favour of the Huguenots. But the Catholics disbelieved in his sincerity; they looked only to Philip; and as long as Philip could supply the Leaguers with men and money, he felt secure on the side of France.

Elizabeth attacks Philip.

The vanishing of all hope of French aid was the more momentous to the Netherlands that at this moment Parma won his crowning triumph in the capture of Antwerp. Besieged in the winter of 1584, the city surrendered after a brave resistance in the August of 1585. But heavy as was the blow, it brought gain as well as loss to the Netherlanders. It forced Elizabeth into action. She refused indeed the title of Protector of the Netherlands which the States offered her, and compelled them to place Brill and Flushing in her hands as pledges for the repayment of her expenses. But she sent aid. Lord Leicester was hurried to the Flemish coast with eight thousand men. In a yet bolder spirit of defiance Francis Drake was suffered to set sail with a fleet of twenty-five vessels for the Spanish Main. The two expeditions had very different fortunes. Drake's voyage was a series of triumphs. The wrongs inflicted on English seamen by the Inquisition were requited by the burning of the cities of St Domingo and Carthagena. The coasts of Cuba and Florida were plundered, and though the gold fleet escaped him, Drake returned in the summer of 1586 with a heavy booty. Leicester on the other hand was paralyzed by his own intriguing temper, by strife with the Queen, and by his military incapacity. Only one disastrous skirmish at Zutphen broke the inaction of his forces, while Elizabeth strove vainly to use the presence of his army to force Parma and the States alike to a peace which would restore Philip's sovereignty over the Netherlands, but leave them free enough to serve as a check on Philip's designs against herself.

The Catholic Plots.

Foiled as she was in securing a check on Philip in the Low Countries, the Queen was more successful in robbing

him of the aid of the Scots. The action of King James had been guided by his greed of the English Crown, and a secret promise of the succession sufficed to lure him from the cause of Spain. In July 1586 he formed an alliance, defensive and offensive, with Elizabeth, and pledged himself not only to give no aid to revolt in Ireland, but to suppress any Catholic rising in the northern counties. The pledge was the more important that the Catholic resentment seemed passing into fanaticism. Maddened by confiscation and persecution, by the hopelessness of rebellion within or of deliverance from without, the fiercer Catholics listened to schemes of assassination to which the murder of William of Orange lent a terrible significance. The detection of Somerville, a fanatic who had received the host before setting out for London "to shoot the Queen with his dagg," was followed by measures of natural severity, by the flight and arrest of Catholic gentry and peers, by a vigorous purification of the Inns of Court where a few Catholics lingered, and by the despatch of fresh batches of priests to the block. The trial and death of Parry, a member of the House of Commons who had served in the royal household, on a similar charge fed the general panic. The leading Protestants formed an association whose members pledged themselves to pursue to the death all who sought the Queen's life, and all on whose behalf it was sought. The association soon became national, and the Parliament met together in a transport of horror and loyalty to give it legal sanction. All Jesuits and seminary priests were banished from the realm on pain of death, and a bill for the security of the Queen disqualified any claimant of the succession who instigated subjects to rebellion or hurt to the Queen's person from ever succeeding to the Crown

CHAP VI. — England and Spain. 1582–1593.

Death of Mary Stuart.

The threat was aimed at Mary Stuart. Weary of her long restraint, of her failure to rouse Philip or Scotland to her aid, of the baffled revolt of the English Catholics and the baffled intrigues of the Jesuits, Mary had bent for

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1598.

a moment to submission. "Let me go," she wrote to Elizabeth; "let me retire from this island to some solitude where I may prepare my soul to die. Grant this and I will sign away every right which either I or mine can claim." But the cry was useless, and in 1586 her despair found a new and more terrible hope in the plots against Elizabeth's life. She knew and approved the vow of Anthony Babington and a band of young Catholics, for the most part connected with the royal household, to kill the Queen and seat Mary on the throne, but plot and approval alike passed through Walsingham's hands, and the seizure of Mary's correspondence revealed her connivance in the scheme. Babington with his fellow conspirators were at once sent to the block, and the provisions of the act passed in the last Parliament were put in force against Mary. In spite of her protests a Commission of Peers sate as her judges at Fotheringay Castle; and their verdict of "guilty" annihilated under the provisions of the statute her claim to the Crown. The streets of London blazed with bonfires, and peals rang out from steeple to steeple at the news of Mary's condemnation; but in spite of the prayer of Parliament for her execution and the pressure of the Council Elizabeth shrank from her death The force of public opinion however was now carrying all before it, and after three months of hesitation the unanimous demand of her people wrested a sullen consent from the Queen She flung the warrant signed upon the floor, and the Council took on themselves the responsibility of executing it. On the 8th of February, 1587, Mary died on a scaffold which was erected in the castle-hall at Fotheringay as dauntlessly as she had lived. "Do not weep," she said to her ladies, "I have given my word for you." "Tell my friends," she charged Melville, "that I die a good Catholic"

Philip and England.

The blow was hardly struck before Elizabeth turned with fury on the ministers who had forced her hand.

Cecil, who had now become Lord Burghley, was for a while disgraced, and Davison, who carried the warrant to the Council, was sent to the Tower to atone for an act which shattered the policy of the Queen. The death of Mary Stuart in fact seemed to have removed the last obstacle out of Philip's way. It had put an end to the divisions of the English Catholics. To the Spanish King, as to the nearest heir in blood who was of the Catholic Faith, Mary bequeathed her rights to the Crown, and the hopes of her more passionate adherents were from that moment bound up in the success of Spain. The blow too kindled afresh the fervour of the Papacy, and Sixtus the Fifth offered to aid Philip with money in his invasion of the heretic realm. But Philip no longer needed pressure to induce him to act. Drake's triumph had taught him that the conquest of England was needful for the security of his dominion in the New World, and for the mastery of the seas. The presence of an English army in Flanders convinced him that the road to the conquest of the States lay through England itself. Nor did the attempt seem a very perilous one. Allen and his Jesuit emissaries assured Philip that the bulk of the nation was ready to rise as soon as a strong Spanish force was landed on English shores. They numbered off the great lords who would head the revolt, the Earls of Arundel and Northumberland, who were both Catholics, the Earls of Worcester, Cumberland, Oxford, and Southampton, Viscount Montacute, the Lords Dacres, Morley, Vaux, Wharton, Windsor, Lumley, and Stourton. "All these," wrote Allen, "will follow our party when they see themselves supported by a sufficient foreign force." Against these were only "the new nobles, who are hated in the country," and the towns. "But the strength of England is not in its towns." All the more warlike counties were Catholic in their sympathies; and the persecution of the recusants had destroyed the last traces of their loyalty to the Queen. Three hundred priests had been sent across the sea to organize the insur-

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1582-1598.

rection, and they were circulating a book which Allen had lately published "to prove that it is not only lawful but our bounden duty to take up arms at the Pope's bidding and to fight for the Catholic faith against the Queen and other heretics." A landing in the Pope's name would be best, but a landing in Philip's name would be almost as secure of success. Trained as they were now by Allen and his three hundred priests, English Catholics "would let in Catholic auxiliaries of any nation, for they have learned to hate their domestic heretic more than any foreign power"

Philip and France.

What truth there was in the Jesuit view of England time was to prove. But there can be no doubt that Philip believed it, and that the promise of a Catholic rising was his chief inducement to attempt an invasion. The operations of Parma therefore were suspended with a view to the greater enterprize, and vessels and supplies for the fleet which had for three years been gathering in the Tagus were collected from every port of the Spanish coast Only France held Philip back. He dared not attack England till all dread of a counter-attack from France was removed; and though the rise of the League had seemed to secure this, its success had now become more doubtful The King, who had striven to embarrass it by placing himself at its head, gathered round him the politicians and the moderate Catholics who saw in the triumph of the new Duke of Guise the ruin of the monarchy, while Henry of Navarre took the field at the head of the Huguenots, and won in 1587 the victory of Coutras. Guise restored the balance by driving the German allies of Henry from the realm; but the Huguenots were still unconquered, and the King, standing apart, fed a struggle which lightened for him the pressure of the League. Philip was forced to watch the wavering fortunes of the struggle, but while he watched, another blow fell on him from the sea. The news of the coming Armada called Drake again to action. In April, 1587, he set sail with

thirty small barks, burned the storeships and galleys in the harbour of Cadiz, stormed the ports of the Faro, and was only foiled in his aim of attacking the Armada itself by orders from home. A descent upon Corunna however completed what Drake called his "singeing of the Spanish king's beard." Elizabeth used the daring blow to back some negotiations for peace which she was still conducting in the Netherlands. But on Philip's side at least these negotiations were simply delusive. The Spanish pride had been touched to the quick. Amidst the exchange of protocols Parma gathered seventeen thousand men for the coming invasion, collected a fleet of flat-bottomed transports at Dunkirk, and waited impatiently for the Armada to protect his crossing. The attack of Drake however, the death of its first admiral, and the winter storms delayed the fleet from sailing What held it back even more effectually was the balance of parties in France But in the spring of 1588 Philip's patience was rewarded The League had been baffled till now not so much by the resistance of the Huguenots as by the attitude of the King So long as Henry the Third held aloof from both parties and gave a rallying point to the party of moderation the victory of the Leaguers was impossible. The difficulty was solved by the daring of Henry of Guise. The fanatical populace of Paris rose at his call; the royal troops were beaten off from the barricades; and on the 12th of May the King found himself a prisoner in the hands of the Duke. Guise was made lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and Philip was assured on the side of France.

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1593.

The Armada sails.

The revolution was hardly over when at the end of May the Armada started from Lisbon. But it had scarcely put to sea when a gale in the Bay of Biscay drove its scattered vessels into Ferrol, and it was only on the nineteenth of July 1588 that the sails of the Armada were seen from the Lizard, and the English beacons flared out their alarm along the coast. The news found England ready. An army was mustering under Leicester at Tilbury, the militia of the

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1593.

midland counties were gathering to London, while those of the south and east were held in readiness to meet a descent on either shore. The force which Parma hoped to lead consisted of forty thousand men, for the Armada brought nearly twenty-two thousand soldiers to be added to the seventeen thousand who were waiting to cross from the Netherlands. Formidable as this force was, it was far too weak by itself to do the work which Philip meant it to do Had Parma landed on the earliest day he purposed, he would have found his way to London barred by a force stronger than his own, a force too of men in whose ranks were many who had already crossed pikes on equal terms with his best infantry in Flanders "When I shall have landed," he warned his master, "I must fight battle after battle, I shall lose men by wounds and disease, I must leave detachments behind me to keep open my communications; and in a short time the body of my army will become so weak that not only I may be unable to advance in the face of the enemy, and time may be given to the heretics and your Majesty's other enemies to interfere, but there may fall out some notable inconveniences, with the loss of everything, and I be unable to remedy it." What Philip really counted on was the aid which his army would find within England itself. Parma's chance of victory, if he succeeded in landing, lay in a Catholic rising. But at this crisis patriotism proved stronger than religious fanaticism in the hearts of the English Catholics The news of invasion ran like fire along the English coasts. The whole nation answered the Queen's appeal. Instinct told England that its work was to be done at sea, and the royal fleet was soon lost among the vessels of the volunteers. London, when Elizabeth asked for fifteen ships and five thousand men, offered thirty ships and ten thousand seamen, while ten thousand of its train-bands drilled in the Artillery ground. Every seaport showed the same temper. Coasters put out from every little harbour. Squires and merchants pushed off in

their own little barks for a brush with the Spaniards. In the presence of the stranger all religious strife was forgotten. The work of the Jesuits was undone in an hour Of the nobles and squires whose tenants were to muster under the flag of the invader not one proved a traitor The greatest lords on Allen's list of Philip's helpers, Cumberland, Oxford, and Northumberland, brought their vessels up alongside of Drake and Lord Howard as soon as Philip's fleet appeared in the Channel. The Catholic gentry who had been painted as longing for the coming of the stranger, led their tenantry, when the stranger came, to the muster at Tilbury

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1588.

The two fleets

The loyalty of the Catholics decided the fate of Philip's scheme. Even if Parma's army succeeded in landing, its task was now an impossible one. Forty thousand Spaniards were no match for four millions of Englishmen, banded together by a common resolve to hold England against the foreigner. But to secure a landing at all, the Spaniards had to be masters of the Channel. Parma might gather his army on the Flemish coast, but every estuary and inlet was blocked by the Dutch cruizers. The Netherlands knew well that the conquest of England was planned only as a prelude to their own reduction; and the enthusiasm with which England rushed to the conflict was hardly greater than that which stirred the Hollanders. A fleet of ninety vessels, with the best Dutch seamen at their head, held the Scheldt and the shallows of Dunkirk, and it was only by driving this fleet from the water that Parma's army could be set free to join in the great enterprize. The great need of the Armada therefore was to reach the coast of Flanders. It was ordered to make for Calais, and wait there for the junction of Parma. But even if Parma joined it, the passage of his force was impossible without a command of the Channel; and in the Channel lay an English fleet resolved to struggle hard for the mastery. As the Armada sailed on in a broad crescent past Plymouth, the vessels which had gathered under Lord Howard

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1582-1593.

of Effingham slipped out of the bay and hung with the wind upon their rear. In numbers the two forces were strangely unequal, for the English fleet counted only eighty vessels against the hundred and thirty-two which composed the Armada. In size of ships the disproportion was even greater. Fifty of the English vessels, including the squadron of the Lord Admiral and the craft of the volunteers, were little bigger than yachts of the present day. Even of the thirty Queen's ships which formed its main body, there were but four which equalled in tonnage the smallest of the Spanish galleons. Sixty-five of these galleons formed the most formidable half of the Spanish fleet; and four galleasses, or gigantic galleys, armed with fifty guns apiece, fifty-six armed merchantmen, and twenty pinnaces made up the rest The Armada was provided with 2,500 cannons, and a vast store of provisions; it had on board 8,000 seamen and more than 20,000 soldiers; and if a court-favourite the Duke of Medina Sidonia, had been placed at its head, he was supported by the ablest staff of naval officers which Spain possessed

The fight with the Armada.

Small however as the English ships were, they were in perfect trim; they sailed two feet for the Spaniards' one, they were manned with 9,000 hardy seamen, and their Admiral was backed by a crowd of captains who had won fame in the Spanish seas. With him was Hawkins, who had been the first to break into the charmed circle of the Indies; Frobisher, the hero of the North-West passage; and above all Drake, who held command of the privateers. They had won too the advantage of the wind; and, closing in or drawing off as they would, the lightly-handled English vessels, which fired four shots to the Spaniard's one, hung boldly on the rear of the great fleet as it moved along the Channel. "The feathers of the Spaniard," in the phrase of the English seamen, were "plucked one by one." Galleon after galleon was sunk, boarded, driven on shore; and yet Medina Sidonia failed in bringing his pursuers to a close engagement. Now halting, now

moving slowly on, the running fight between the two fleets lasted throughout the week, till on Sunday, the twenty-eighth of July, the Armada dropped anchor in Calais roads. The time had come for sharper work if the junction of the Armada with Parma was to be prevented; for, demoralized as the Spaniards had been by the merciless chase, their loss in ships had not been great, and their appearance off Dunkirk might drive off the ships of the Hollanders who hindered the sailing of the Duke. On the other hand, though the numbers of English ships had grown, their supplies of food and ammunition were fast running out. Howard therefore resolved to force an engagement; and, lighting eight fire-ships at midnight, sent them down with the tide upon the Spanish line. The galleons at once cut their cables, and stood out in panic to sea, drifting with the wind in a long line off Gravelines. Drake resolved at all costs to prevent their return. At dawn on the twenty-ninth the English ships closed fairly in, and almost their last cartridge was spent ere the sun went down.

Flight of the Armada.

Hard as the fight had been, it seemed far from a decisive one. Three great galleons indeed had sunk in the engagement, three had drifted helplessly on to the Flemish coast, but the bulk of the Spanish vessels remained, and even to Drake the fleet seemed "wonderful great and strong." Within the Armada itself however all hope was gone. Huddled together by the wind and the deadly English fire, their sails torn, their masts shot away, the crowded galleons had become mere slaughter-houses. Four thousand men had fallen, and bravely as the seamen fought, they were cowed by the terrible butchery. Medina himself was in despair. "We are lost, Señor Oquenda," he cried to his bravest captain; "what are we to do?" "Let others talk of being lost," replied Oquenda, "your Excellency has only to order up fresh cartridge." But Oquenda stood alone, and a council of war resolved on retreat to Spain by the one course open, that of a

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1593.

circuit round the Orkneys. "Never anything pleased me better," wrote Drake, "than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards. Have a good eye to the Prince of Parma, for, with the grace of God, I doubt not ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees." But the work of destruction was reserved for a mightier foe than Drake. The English vessels were soon forced to give up the chase by the running out of their supplies. But the Spanish ships had no sooner reached the Orkneys than the storms of the northern seas broke on them with a fury before which all concert and union disappeared. In October fifty reached Corunna, bearing ten thousand men stricken with pestilence and death. Of the rest some were sunk, some dashed to pieces against the Irish cliffs. The wreckers of the Orkneys and the Faroes, the clansmen of the Scottish Isles, the kernes of Donegal and Galway, all had their part in the work of murder and robbery. Eight thousand Spaniards perished between the Giant's Causeway and the Blaskets. On a strand near Sligo an English captain numbered eleven hundred corpses which had been cast up by the sea. The flower of the Spanish nobility, who had been sent on the new crusade under Alonzo da Leyva, after twice suffering shipwreck, put a third time to sea to founder on a reef near Dunluce.

Its effect on England

"I sent my ships against men," said Philip when the news reached him, "not against the seas." It was in nobler tone that England owned her debt to the storm that drove the Armada to its doom. On the medal that commemorated its triumph were graven the words, "The Lord sent his wind, and scattered them." The pride of the conquerors was hushed before their sense of a mighty deliverance. It was not till England saw the broken host "fly with a southerly wind to the north" that she knew what a weight of fear she had borne for thirty years. The victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain,

the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people, was like a passing from death unto life. Within as without, the dark sky suddenly cleared. The national unity proved stronger than the religious strife. When the Catholic lords flocked to the camp at Tilbury, or put off to join the fleet in the Channel, Elizabeth could pride herself on a victory as great as the victory over the Armada. She had won it by her patience and moderation, by her refusal to lend herself to the fanaticism of the Puritan or the reaction of the Papist, by her sympathy with the mass of the people, by her steady and unflinching preference of national unity to any passing considerations of safety or advantage. For thirty years, amidst the shock of religious passions at home and abroad, she had reigned not as a Catholic or as a Protestant Queen, but as a Queen of England, and it was to England, Catholic and Protestant alike, that she could appeal in her hour of need. "Let tyrants fear," she exclaimed in words that still ring like the sound of a trumpet, as she appeared among her soldiers. "Let tyrants fear! I have always so behaved myself that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects! And therefore I am come among you, as you see, resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all." The work of Edward and of Mary was undone, and the strife of religions fell powerless before the sense of a common country.

Its European results

Nor were the results of the victory less momentous to Europe at large. What Wolsey and Henry had struggled for, Elizabeth had done. At her accession England was scarcely reckoned among European powers. The wisest statesmen looked on her as doomed to fall into the hands of France, or to escape that fate by remaining a dependency of Spain. But the national independence had grown with the national life. France was no longer a danger, Scotland was no longer a foe. Instead of hanging

CHAP. VI. England and Spain. 1588-1598.

on the will of Spain, England had fronted Spain and conquered her. She now stood on a footing of equality with the greatest powers of the world. Her military weight indeed was drawn from the discord which rent the peoples about her, and would pass away with its close. But a new and lasting greatness opened on the sea. She had sprung at a bound into a great sea-power Her fleets were spreading terror through the New World as through the Old. When Philip by his conquest of Portugal had gathered the two greatest navies of the world into his single hand, England had faced him and driven his fleet from the seas. But the rise of England was even less memorable than the fall of Spain. That Spain had fallen few of the world's statesmen saw then. Philip thanked God that he could easily, if he chose, "place another fleet upon the seas," and the despatch of a second armada soon afterwards showed that his boast was a true one. But what had vanished was his mastery of the seas. The defeat of the Armada was the first of a series of defeats at the hands of the English and the Dutch. The naval supremacy of Spain was lost, and with it all was lost. An empire so widely scattered over the world, and whose dominions were parted by intervening nations, could only be held together by its command of the seas. One century saw Spain stripped of the bulk of the Netherlands, another of her possessions in Italy, a third of her dominions in the New World. But slowly as her empire broke, the cause of ruin was throughout the same. It was the loss of her maritime supremacy that robbed her of all, and her maritime supremacy was lost in the wreck of the Armada.

The counter-attack on Spain.

If Philip met the shock with a calm patience, it at once ruined his plans in the West. France broke again from his grasp. Since the day of the Barricades Henry the Third had been virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of Guise; but the defeat of the Armada woke him to a new effort for the recovery of power, and at the close of 1588 Guise was summoned to his presence and stabbed as

he entered by the royal body-guard. The blow broke the strength of the League. The Duke of Mayenne, a brother of the victim, called indeed the Leaguers to arms; and made war upon the King. But Henry found help in his cousin, Henry of Navarre, who brought a Huguenot force to his aid; and the moderate Catholics rallied as of old round the Crown. The Leaguers called on Philip for aid, but Philip was forced to guard against attack at home. Elizabeth had resolved to give blow for blow. The Portuguese were writhing under Spanish conquest; and a claimant of the crown, Don Antonio, who had found refuge in England, promised that on his landing the country would rise in arms. In the spring of 1589 therefore an expedition of fifty vessels and 15,000 men was sent under Drake and Sir John Norris against Lisbon. Its chances of success hung on a quick arrival in Portugal, but the fleet touched at Corunna, and after burning the ships in its harbour the army was tempted to besiege the town. A Spanish army which advanced to its relief was repulsed by an English force of half its numbers. Corunna however held stubbornly out, and in the middle of May Norris was forced to break the siege and to sail to Lisbon. But the delay had been fatal to his enterprize. The country did not rise; the English troops were thinned with sickness; want of cannon hindered a siege; and after a fruitless march up the Tagus Norris fell back on the fleet. The coast was pillaged, and the expedition returned baffled to England. Luckless as the campaign had proved, the bold defiance of Spain and the defeat of a Spanish army on Spanish ground kindled a new daring in Englishmen while they gave new heart to Philip's enemies. In the summer of 1589 Henry the Third laid siege to Paris. The fears of the League were removed by the knife of a priest, Jacques Clement, who assassinated the King in August; but Henry of Navarre, or, as he now became, Henry the Fourth, stood next to him in line of blood, and

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

1588-1593.

CHAP. VI.

England and Spain.

[illegible]

Henry the Fourth.

Philip saw with dismay a Protestant mount the throne of France.

From this moment the thought of attack on England, even his own warfare in the Netherlands, was subordinated in the mind of the Spanish King to the need of crushing Henry the Fourth. It was not merely that Henry's Protestantism threatened to spread heresy over the West. Catholic or Protestant, the union of France under an active and enterprizing ruler would be equally fatal to Philip's designs. Once gathered round its King, France was a nearer obstacle to the re-conquest of the Netherlands than ever England could be. On the other hand, the religious strife, to which Henry's accession gave a fresh life and vigour, opened wide prospects to Philip's ambition. Far from proving a check upon Spain, it seemed as if France might be turned into a Spanish dependency. While the Leaguers proclaimed the Cardinal of Bourbon King, under the name of Charles the Tenth, they recognized Philip as Protector of France. Their hope indeed lay in his aid, and their army was virtually his own. On the other hand Henry the Fourth was environed with difficulties. It was only by declaring his willingness to be "further instructed" in matters of faith, in other words by holding out hopes of his conversion, that he succeeded in retaining the moderate Catholics under his standard. His desperate bravery alone won a victory at Yvry over the forces of the League, which enabled him to again form the siege of Paris in 1590. All recognized Paris as the turning point in the struggle, and the League called loudly for Philip's aid. To give it was to break the work which Parma was doing in the Netherlands, and to allow the United Provinces a breathing space in their sorest need. But even the Netherlands were of less moment than the loss of France; and Philip's orders forced Parma to march to the relief of Paris. The work was done with a skill which proved the Duke to be a master in the art of war. The siege of Paris

CHAP. VI.

was raised; the efforts of Henry to bring the Spaniards to an engagement were foiled; and it was only when the King's army broke up from sheer weariness that Parma withdrew unharmed to the north.

England and Henry.

England was watching the struggle of Henry the Fourth with a keen interest. The failure of the expedition against Lisbon had put an end for the time to any direct attacks upon Spain, and the exhaustion of the treasury forced Elizabeth to content herself with issuing commissions to volunteers. But the war was a national one, and the nation waged it for itself. Merchants, gentlemen, nobles fitted out privateers. The sea-dogs in ever growing numbers scoured the Spanish Main. Their quest had its ill chances as it had its good, and sometimes the prizes made were far from paying for the cost of the venture. "Paul might plant, and Apollos might water," John Hawkins explained after an unsuccessful voyage, "but it is God only that giveth the increase!" But more often the profit was enormous. Spanish galleons, Spanish merchant-ships, were brought month after month to English harbours. The daring of the English seamen faced any odds. Ten English trading vessels beat off twelve Spanish war-galleys in the Straits of Gibraltar. Sir Richard Grenville in a single bark, the Revenge, found himself girt in by fifty men-of-war, each twice as large as his own. He held out from afternoon to the following daybreak, beating off attempt after attempt to board him; and it was not till his powder was spent, more than half his crew killed, and the rest wounded, that the ship struck its flag. Grenville had refused to surrender, and was carried mortally wounded to die in a Spanish ship. "Here die I, Richard Grenville," were his last words, "with a joyful and a quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a good soldier ought to do, who has fought for his country and his queen, for honour and religion." But the drift of the French war soon forced Elizabeth back again into the strife. In each of the French provinces the civil war went on: and in

CHAP. VI. — England and Spain. 1588–1598.

Britanny, where the contest raged fiercest, Philip sent the Leaguers a supply of Spanish troops. Normandy was already in Catholic hands, and the aim of the Spanish King was to secure the western coast for future operations against England. Elizabeth pressed Henry the Fourth to foil these projects, and in the winter of 1591 she sent money and men to aid him in the siege of Rouen.

Henry's conversion.

To save Rouen Philip was again forced to interrupt his work of conquest in the Netherlands. Parma marched anew into the heart of France, and with the same consummate generalship as of old relieved the town without giving Henry a chance of battle. But the day was fast going against the Leaguers The death of their puppet-king, Charles the Tenth, left them without a sovereign to oppose to Henry of Navarre; and their scheme of conferring the crown on Isabella, Philip's daughter by Elizabeth of France, with a husband whom Philip should choose, awoke jealousies in the house of Guise itself, while it gave strength to the national party who shrank from laying France at the feet of Spain. Even the Parliament of Paris, till now the centre of Catholic fanaticism, protested against setting the crown of France on the brow of a stranger. The politicians drew closer to Henry of Navarre, and the moderate Catholics pressed for his reconciliation to the Church as a means of restoring unity to the realm. The step had become so inevitable that even the Protestants were satisfied with Henry's promise of toleration; and in the summer of 1593 he declared himself a Catholic. With his conversion the civil war came practically to an end It was in vain that Philip strove to maintain the zeal of the Leaguers, or that the Guises stubbornly kept the field. All France drew steadily to the King. Paris opened her gates in the spring of 1594, and the chief of the Leaguers, the Duke of Mayenne, submitted at the close of the year. Even Rome abandoned the contest, and at the end of 1595 Henry received solemn absolution from Clement the Eighth. From that moment

England and Spain. 1588-1598.

France rose again into her old power, and the old national policy of opposition to the House of Austria threw her weight into the wavering balance of Philip's fortunes. The death of Parma had already lightened the peril of the United Provinces, but though their struggle in the Low Countries was to last for years, from the moment of Henry the Fourth's conversion their independence was secure. Nor was the restoration of the French monarchy to its old greatness of less moment to England. Philip was yet to send an armada against her coasts; he was again to stir up a fierce revolt in northern Ireland. But all danger from Spain was over with the revival of France. Even were England to shrink from a strife in which she had held Philip so gloriously at bay, French policy would never suffer the island to fall unaided under the power of Spain. The fear of foreign conquest passed away. The long struggle for sheer existence was over. What remained was the Protestantism, the national union, the lofty patriotism, the pride in England and the might of Englishmen, which had drawn life more vivid and intense than they had ever known before from the long battle with the Papacy and with Spain.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ENGLAND OF SHAKSPERE.

1593—1603.

English Literature. THE defeat of the Armada, the deliverance from Catholicism and Spain, marked the critical moment in our political developement. From that hour England's destiny was fixed. She was to be a Protestant power. Her sphere of action was to be upon the seas. She was to claim her part in the New World of the West. But the moment was as critical in her intellectual developement. As yet English literature had lagged behind the literature of the rest of Western Christendom. It was now to take its place among the greatest literatures of the world. The general awakening of national life, the increase of wealth, of refinement, and leisure that characterized the reign of Elizabeth, was accompanied by a quickening of intelligence. The Renascence had done little for English letters. The overpowering influence of the new models both of thought and style which it gave to the world in the writers of Greece and Rome was at first felt only as a fresh check to the revival of English poetry or prose. Though England shared more than any European country in the political and ecclesiastical results of the New Learning, its literary results were far less than in the rest of Europe, in Italy, or Germany, or France. More alone ranks among the great classical scholars of the sixteenth century. Classical learning indeed all but perished at the Universities in the

storm of the Reformation, nor did it revive there till the close of Elizabeth's reign. Insensibly however the influences of the Renascence fertilized the intellectual soil of England for the rich harvest that was to come. The court poetry which clustered round Wyatt and Surrey, exotic and imitative as it was, promised a new life for English verse. The growth of grammar-schools realized the dream of Sir Thomas More, and brought the middle-classes, from the squire to the petty tradesman, into contact with the masters of Greece and Rome. The love of travel, which became so remarkable a characteristic of Elizabeth's age, quickened the temper of the wealthier nobles. "Home-keeping youths," says Shakspere in words that mark the time, "have ever homely wits;" and a tour over the Continent became part of the education of a gentleman. Fairfax's version of Tasso, Harrington's version of Ariosto, were signs of the influence which the literature of Italy, the land to which travel led most frequently, exerted on English minds. The classical writers told upon England at large when they were popularized by a crowd of translations. Chapman's noble version of Homer stands high above its fellows, but all the greater poets and historians of the ancient world were turned into English before the close of the sixteenth century.

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

Historic Literature.

It is characteristic of England that the first kind of literature to rise from its long death was the literature of history. But the form in which it rose marked the difference between the world in which it had perished and that in which it re-appeared. During the Middle Ages the world had been without a past, save the shadowy and unknown past of early Rome; and annalist and chronicler told the story of the years which went before as a preface to their tale of the present without a sense of any difference between them. But the religious, social, and political change which passed over England under the New Monarchy broke the continuity of its life; and

CHAP. VII. — The England of Shakspere. — 1593-1603.

the depth of the rift between the two ages is seen by the way in which History passes on its revival under Elizabeth from the mediæval form of pure narrative to its modern form of an investigation and reconstruction of the past. The new interest which attached to the bygone world led to the collection of its annals, their reprinting and embodiment in an English shape. It was his desire to give the Elizabethan Church a basis in the past, as much as any pure zeal for letters, which induced Archbishop Parker to lead the way in the first of these labours. The collection of historical manuscripts which, following in the track of Leland, he rescued from the wreck of the monastic libraries created a school of antiquarian imitators, whose research and industry have preserved for us almost every work of permanent historical value which existed before the Dissolution of the Monasteries. To his publication of some of our earlier chronicles we owe the series of similar publications which bear the name of Camden, Twysden, and Gale. But as a branch of literature, English History in the new shape which we have noted began in the work of the poet Daniel. The chronicles of Stowe and Speed, who preceded him, are simple records of the past, often copied almost literally from the annals they used, and utterly without style or arrangement; while Daniel, inaccurate and superficial as he is, gave his story a literary form and embodied it in a pure and graceful prose. Two larger works at the close of Elizabeth's reign, the "History of the Turks" by Knolles, and Raleigh's vast but unfinished plan of the "History of the World," showed a widening of historic interest beyond the merely national bounds to which it had hitherto been confined.

Euphuism

A far higher developement of our literature sprang from the growing influence which Italy was exerting, partly through travel and partly through its poetry and romances, on the manners and taste of the time. Men made more account of a story of Boccaccio's, it was said, than of a story from the Bible. The dress, the speech, the manners of

Italy became objects of almost passionate imitation, and of an imitation not always of the wisest or noblest kind. To Ascham it seemed like "the enchantment of Circe brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England." "An Italianate Englishman," ran the harder proverb of Italy itself, "is an incarnate devil." The literary form which this imitation took seemed at any rate ridiculous. John Lyly, distinguished both as a dramatist and a poet, laid aside the tradition of English style for a style modelled on the decadence of Italian prose. Euphuism, as the new fashion has been named from the prose romance of Euphues which Lyly published in 1579, is best known to modern readers by the pitiless caricature in which Shakspere quizzed its pedantry, its affectation, the meaningless monotony of its far-fetched phrazes, the absurdity of its extravagant conceits. Its representative, Armado in "Love's Labour's Lost," is "a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight," "that hath a mint of phrazes in his brain; one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony." But its very extravagance sprang from the general burst of delight in the new resources of thought and language which literature felt to be at its disposal, and the new sense of literary beauty which it disclosed in its affectation, in its love of a "mint of phrazes," and the "music of its ever vain tongue," the new sense of pleasure which it revealed in delicacy or grandeur of expression, in the structure and arrangement of sentences, in what has been termed the atmosphere of words, was a sense out of which style was itself to spring.

Sidney.

For a time Euphuism had it all its own way. Elizabeth was the most affected and detestable of Euphuists; and "that beauty in Court which could not parley Euphuism," a courtier of Charles the First's time tells us, "was as little regarded as she that now there speaks not French." The fashion however passed away, but the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney shows the wonderful advance which

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1588-1603.

prose had made under its influence. Sidney, the nephew of Lord Leicester, was the idol of his time, and perhaps no figure reflects the age more fully and more beautifully. Fair as he was brave, quick of wit as of affection, noble and generous in temper, dear to Elizabeth as to Spenser, the darling of the Court and of the camp, his learning and his genius made him the centre of the literary world which was springing into birth on English soil. He had travelled in France and Italy, he was master alike of the older learning and of the new discoveries of astronomy. Bruno dedicated to him as to a friend his metaphysical speculations; he was familiar with the drama of Spain, the poems of Ronsard, the sonnets of Italy. Sidney combined the wisdom of a grave councillor with the romantic chivalry of a knight-errant. "I never heard the old story of Percy and Douglas," he says, "that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." He flung away his life to save the English army in Flanders, and as he lay dying they brought a cup of water to his fevered lips. He bade them give it to a soldier who was stretched on the ground beside him. "Thy necessity," he said, "is greater than mine." The whole of Sidney's nature, his chivalry and his learning, his thirst for adventures, his freshness of tone, his tenderness and childlike simplicity of heart, his affectation and false sentiment, his keen sense of pleasure and delight, pours itself out in the pastoral medley, forced, tedious, and yet strangely beautiful, of his "Arcadia." In his "Defence of Poetry" the youthful exuberance of the romancer has passed into the earnest vigour and grandiose stateliness of the rhetorician But whether in the one work or the other, the flexibility, the music, the luminous clearness of Sidney's style remains the same.

The Novelists.

But the quickness and vivacity of English prose was first developed in a school of Italian imitators which appeared in Elizabeth's later years. The origin of English fiction is to be found in the tales and romances with which

Greene and Nash crowded the market, models for which they found in the Italian novels. The brief form of these novelettes soon led to the appearance of the "pamphlet;" and a new world of readers was seen in the rapidity with which the stories or scurrilous libels that passed under this name were issued, and the greediness with which they were devoured. It was the boast of Greene that in the eight years before his death he had produced forty pamphlets. "In a night or a day would he have yarked up a pamphlet, as well as in seven years, and glad was that printer that might be blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Modern eyes see less of the wit than of the dregs in the books of Greene and his compeers; but the attacks which Nash directed against the Puritans and his rivals were the first English works which shook utterly off the pedantry and extravagance of Euphuism. In his lightness, his facility, his vivacity, his directness of speech, we have the beginning of popular literature. It had descended from the closet to the street, and the very change implied that the street was ready to receive it. The abundance indeed of printers and of printed books at the close of the Queen's reign shows that the world of readers and writers had widened far beyond the small circle of scholars and courtiers with which it began.

Influence of the age.

But to the national and local influences which were telling on English literature was added that of the restlessness and curiosity which characterized the age. At the moment which we have reached the sphere of human interest was widened as it has never been widened before or since by the revelation of a new heaven and a new earth. It was only in the later years of the sixteenth century that the discoveries of Copernicus were brought home to the general intelligence of mankind by Kepler and Galileo, or that the daring of the Buccaneers broke through the veil which greed of Spain had drawn across the New World of Columbus. Hardly inferior to these revelations as a source of intellectual impulse was the sudden and picturesque

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

way in which the various races of the world were brought face to face with one another through the universal passion for foreign travel. While the red tribes of the West were described by Amerigo Vespucci, and the strange civilization of Mexico and Peru disclosed by Cortes and Pizarro, the voyages of the Portuguese threw open the older splendours of the East, and the story of India and China was told for the first time to Christendom by Maffei and Mendoza. England took her full part in this work of discovery. Jenkinson, an English traveller, made his way to Bokhara. Willoughby brought back Muscovy to the knowledge of Western Europe. English mariners penetrated among the Esquimaux, or settled in Virginia. Drake circumnavigated the globe. The "Collection of Voyages" which was published by Hakluyt in 1582 disclosed the vastness of the world itself, the infinite number of the races of mankind, the variety of their laws, their customs, their religions, their very instincts. We see the influence of this new and wider knowledge of the world, not only in the life and richness which it gave to the imagination of the time, but in the immense interest which from this moment attached itself to Man. Shakspere's conception of Caliban, like the questioning of Montaigne, marks the beginning of a new and a truer, because a more inductive, philosophy of human nature and human history. The fascination exercized by the study of human character showed itself in the essays of Bacon, and yet more in the wonderful popularity of the drama.

The new English temper.

And to these larger and world-wide sources of poetic power was added in England, at the moment which we have reached in its story, the impulse which sprang from national triumph, from the victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain, the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people. With its new sense of security, its new sense of national energy and national power, the whole aspect of England suddenly changed. As yet

CHAP. VII.

The England of Shakspere.

1588-1603.

the interest of Elizabeth's reign had been political and material; the stage had been crowded with statesmen and warriors, with Cecils and Walsinghams and Drakes. Literature had hardly found a place in the glories of the time. But from the moment when the Armada drifted back broken to Ferrol the figures of warriors and statesmen were dwarfed by the grander figures of poets and philosophers. Amidst the throng in Elizabeth's antechamber the noblest form is that of the singer who lays the "Faerie Queen" at her feet, or of the young lawyer who muses amid the splendours of the presence over the problems of the "Novum Organum." The triumph at Cadiz, the conquest of Ireland, pass unheeded as we watch Hooker building up his "Ecclesiastical Polity" among the sheepfolds, or the genius of Shakspere rising year by year into supremer grandeur in a rude theatre beside the Thames.

Spenser.

The glory of the new literature broke on England with Edmund Spenser. We know little of his life; he was born in 1552 in East London, the son of poor parents, but linked in blood with the Spencers of Althorpe, even then—as he proudly says—"a house of ancient fame." He studied as a sizar at Cambridge, and quitted the University while still a boy to live as a tutor in the north; but after some years of obscure poverty the scorn of a fair "Rosalind" drove him again southwards. A college friendship with Gabriel Harvey served to introduce him to Lord Leicester, who sent him as his envoy into France, and in whose service he first became acquainted with Leicester's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney. From Sidney's house at Penshurst came in 1579 his earliest work, the "Shepherd's Calendar;" in form, like Sidney's own "Arcadia," a pastoral where love and loyalty and Puritanism jostled oddly with the fancied shepherd life. The peculiar melody and profuse imagination which the pastoral disclosed at once placed its author in the forefront of living poets, but a far greater work was already in hand; and from some words of Gabriel Harvey's we see Spenser bent on rivalling

CHAP. VII. — The England of Shakspere. — [illegible]

Ariosto, and even hoping "to overgo" the "Orlando Furioso" in his "Elvish Queen." The ill-will or the indifference of Burleigh however blasted the expectations he had drawn from the patronage of Sidney or Leicester, and from the favour with which he had been welcomed by the Queen. Sidney, in disgrace with Elizabeth through his opposition to the marriage with Anjou, withdrew to Wilton to write the "Arcadia" by his sister's side; and "discontent of my long fruitless stay in princes' courts," the poet tells us, "and expectation vain of idle hopes" drove Spenser into exile. In 1580 he followed Lord Grey as his secretary into Ireland and remained there on the Deputy's recall in the enjoyment of an office and a grant of land from the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. Spenser had thus enrolled himself among the colonists to whom England was looking at the time for the regeneration of Munster, and the practical interest he took in the "barren soil where cold and want and poverty do grow" was shown by the later publication of a prose tractate on the condition and government of the island. It was at Dublin or in his castle of Kilcolman, two miles from Doneraile, "under the foot of Mole, that mountain hoar," that he spent the ten years in which Sidney died and Mary fell on the scaffold and the Armada came and went; and it was in the latter home that Walter Raleigh found him sitting "alwaies idle," as it seemed to his restless friend, "among the cooly shades of the green alders by the Mulla's shore" in a visit made memorable by the poem of "Colin Clout's come home again."

The Faerie Queen

But in the "idlesse" and solitude of the poet's exile the great work begun in the two pleasant years of his stay at Penshurst had at last taken form, and it was to publish the first three books of the "Faerie Queen" that Spenser returned in Raleigh's company to London. The appearance of the "Faerie Queen" in 1590 is the one critical event in the annals of English poetry; it settled in fact the question whether there was to be such

a thing as English poetry or no. The older national verse which had blossomed and died in Caedmon sprang suddenly into a grander life in Chaucer, but it closed again in a yet more complete death. Across the Border indeed the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century preserved something of their master's vivacity and colour, and in England itself the Italian poetry of the Renascence had of late found echoes in Surrey and Sidney. The new English drama too was beginning to display its wonderful powers, and the work of Marlowe had already prepared the way for the work of Shakspere. But bright as was the promise of coming song, no great imaginative poem had broken the silence of English literature for nearly two hundred years when Spenser landed at Bristol with the "Faerie Queen." From that moment the stream of English poetry has flowed on without a break. There have been times, as in the years which immediately followed, when England has "become a nest of singing birds;" there have been times when song was scant and poor; but there never has been a time when England was wholly without a singer.

The new English verse has been true to the source from which it sprang, and Spenser has always been "the poet's poet." But in his own day he was the poet of England at large. The "Faerie Queen" was received with a burst of general welcome. It became "the delight of every accomplished gentleman, the model of every poet, the solace of every soldier." The poem expressed indeed the very life of the time. It was with a true poetic instinct that Spenser fell back for the framework of his story on the faery world of Celtic romance, whose wonder and mystery had in fact become the truest picture of the wonder and mystery of the world around him. In the age of Cortes and of Raleigh dreamland had ceased to be dreamland, and no marvel or adventure that befell lady or knight was stranger than the tales which weather-beaten mariners from the Southern Seas were telling every day to grave merchants upon 'Change. The very incongruities of the

story of Arthur and his knighthood, strangely as it had been built up out of the rival efforts of bard and jongleur and priest, made it the fittest vehicle for the expression of the world of incongruous feeling which we call the Renascence. To modern eyes perhaps there is something grotesque in the strange medley of figures that crowd the canvas of the "Faerie Queen," in its fauns dancing on the sward where knights have hurtled together, in its alternation of the salvage-men from the New World with the satyrs of classic mythology, in the giants, dwarfs, and monsters of popular fancy who jostle with the nymphs of Greek legend and the damosels of mediæval romance. But, strange as the medley is, it reflects truly enough the stranger medley of warring ideals and irreconcileable impulses which made up the life of Spenser's contemporaries. It was not in the "Faerie Queen" only, but in the world which it pourtrayed, that the religious mysticism of the Middle Ages stood face to face with the intellectual freedom of the Revival of Letters, that asceticism and self-denial cast their spell on imaginations glowing with the sense of varied and inexhaustible existence, that the dreamy and poetic refinement of feeling which expressed itself in the fanciful unrealities of chivalry co-existed with the rough practical energy that sprang from an awakening sense of human power, or the lawless extravagance of an idealized friendship and love lived side by side with the moral sternness and elevation which England was drawing from the Reformation and the Bible.

But strangely contrasted as are the elements of the poem, they are harmonized by the calmness and serenity which is the note of the "Faerie Queen." The world of the Renascence is around us, but it is ordered, refined, and calmed by the poet's touch. The warmest scenes which he borrows from the Italian verse of his day are idealized into purity; the very struggle of the men around him is lifted out of its pettier accidents and raised into a spiritual oneness with the struggle in the soul itself. There are allusions in

CHAP. VII.

The England of Shakspere.

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plenty to contemporary events, but the contest between Elizabeth and Mary takes ideal form in that of Una and the false Duessa, and the clash of arms between Spain and the Huguenots comes to us faint and hushed through the serener air. The verse, like the story, rolls on as by its own natural power, without haste or effort or delay. The gorgeous colouring, the profuse and often complex imagery which Spenser's imagination lavishes, leave no sense of confusion in the reader's mind. Every figure, strange as it may be, is seen clearly and distinctly as it passes by. It is in this calmness, this serenity, this spiritual elevation of the "Faerie Queen," that we feel the new life of the coming age moulding into ordered and harmonious form the life of the Renascence. Both in its conception, and in the way in which this conception is realized in the portion of his work which Spenser completed, his poem strikes the note of the coming Puritanism. In his earlier pastoral, the "Shepherd's Calendar," the poet had boldly taken his part with the more advanced reformers against the Church policy of the Court. He had chosen Archbishop Grindal, who was then in disgrace for his Puritan sympathies, as his model of a Christian pastor; and attacked with sharp invective the pomp of the higher clergy. His "Faerie Queen" in its religious theory is Puritan to the core. The worst foe of its "Red-cross Knight" is the false and scarlet-clad Duessa of Rome, who parts him for a while from Truth and leads him to the house of Ignorance. Spenser presses strongly and pitilessly for the execution of Mary Stuart. No bitter word ever breaks the calm of his verse save when it touches on the perils with which Catholicism was environing England, perils before which his knight must fall "were not that Heavenly Grace doth him uphold and steadfast Truth acquite him out of all." But it is yet more in the temper and aim of his work that we catch the nobler and deeper tones of English Puritanism. In his earlier musings at Penshurst the poet had purposed to surpass Ariosto, but

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

the gaiety of Ariosto's song is utterly absent from his own. Not a ripple of laughter breaks the calm surface of Spenser's verse. He is habitually serious, and the seriousness of his poetic tone reflects the seriousness of his poetic purpose. His aim, he tells us, was to represent the moral virtues, to assign to each its knightly patron, so that its excellence might be expressed and its contrary vice trodden under foot by deeds of arms and chivalry. In knight after knight of the twelve he purposed to paint, he wished to embody some single virtue of the virtuous man in its struggle with the faults and errors which specially beset it; till in Arthur, the sum of the whole company, man might have been seen perfected, in his longing and progress towards the "Faerie Queen," the Divine Glory which is the true end of human effort.

The largeness of his culture indeed, his exquisite sense of beauty, and above all the very intensity of his moral enthusiasm, saved Spenser from the narrowness and exaggeration which often distorted goodness into unloveliness in the Puritan. Christian as he is to the core, his Christianity is enriched and fertilized by the larger temper of the Renascence, as well as by a poet's love of the natural world in which the older mythologies struck their roots. Diana and the gods of heathendom take a sacred tinge from the purer sanctities of the new faith; and in one of the greatest songs of the "Faerie Queen" the conception of love widens, as it widened in the mind of a Greek, into the mighty thought of the productive energy of Nature. Spenser borrows in fact the delicate and refined forms of the Platonist philosophy to express his own moral enthusiasm. Not only does he love, as others have loved, all that is noble and pure and of good report, but he is fired as none before or after him have been fired with a passionate sense of moral beauty. Justice, Temperance, Truth, are no mere names to him, but real existences to which his whole nature clings with a rapturous affection. Outer beauty he believed to spring, and loved because it sprang,

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from the beauty of the soul within. There was much in such a moral protest as this to rouse dislike in any age, but it is the glory of the age of Elizabeth that, "mad world" as in many ways it was, all that was noble welcomed the "Faerie Queen." Elizabeth herself, says Spenser, "to mine oaten pipe inclined her ear," and bestowed a pension on the poet. In 1595 he brought three more books of his poem to England. He returned to Ireland to commemorate his marriage in Sonnets and the most beautiful of bridal songs, and to complete the "Faerie Queen" amongst love and poverty and troubles from his Irish neighbours. But these troubles soon took a graver form. In 1599 Ireland broke into revolt, and the poet escaped from his burning house to fly to England, and to die broken-hearted in an inn at Westminster.

The Drama.

If the "Faerie Queen" expressed the higher elements of the Elizabethan age, the whole of that age, its lower elements and its higher alike, was expressed in the English drama. We have already pointed out the circumstances which throughout Europe were giving a poetic impulse to the newly-aroused intelligence of men, and this impulse everywhere took a dramatic shape. The artificial French tragedy which began about this time with Garnier was not indeed destined to exert any influence over English poetry till a later age; but the influence of the Italian comedy, which had begun half a century earlier with Machiavelli and Ariosto, was felt directly through the Novelle, or stories, which served as plots for our dramatists. It left its stamp indeed on some of the worst characteristics of the English stage. The features of our drama that startled the moral temper of the time and won the deadly hatred of the Puritans, its grossness and profanity, its tendency to scenes of horror and crime, its profuse employment of cruelty and lust as grounds of dramatic action, its daring use of the horrible and the unnatural whenever they enable it to display the more terrible and revolting sides of human passion, were derived from the

CHAP. VII. — The England of Shakspere. — 1593-1603. —

Italian stage. It is doubtful how much the English playwrights may have owed to the Spanish drama, which under Lope and Cervantes sprang suddenly into a grandeur that almost rivalled their own. In the intermixture of tragedy and comedy, in the abandonment of the solemn uniformity of poetic diction for the colloquial language of real life, the use of unexpected incidents, the complication of their plots and intrigues, the dramas of England and Spain are remarkably alike; but the likeness seems rather to have sprung from a similarity in the circumstances to which both owed their rise, than to any direct connexion of the one with the other. The real origin of the English drama, in fact, lay not in any influence from without but in the influence of England itself. The temper of the nation was dramatic. Ever since the Reformation, the Palace, the Inns of Court, and the University had been vying with one another in the production of plays; and so early was their popularity that even under Henry the Eighth it was found necessary to create a "Master of the Revels" to supervise them. Every progress of Elizabeth from shire to shire was a succession of shows and interludes. Dian with her nymphs met the Queen as she returned from hunting; Love presented her with his golden arrow as she passed through the gates of Norwich. From the earlier years of her reign the new spirit of the Renascence had been pouring itself into the rough mould of the Mystery Plays, whose allegorical virtues and vices, or scriptural heroes and heroines, had handed on the spirit of the drama through the Middle Ages. Adaptations from classical pieces began to alternate with the purely religious "Moralities;" and an attempt at a livelier style of expression and invention appeared in the popular comedy of "Gammar Gurton's Needle;" while Sackville, Lord Dorset, in his tragedy of "Gorboduc" made a bold effort at sublimity of diction, and introduced the use of blank verse as the vehicle of dramatic dialogue.

The England of Shakspere.

1588–1603.

The theatre and the people.

But it was not to these tentative efforts of scholars and nobles that the English stage was really indebted for the amazing outburst of genius which dates from the year 1576, when "the Earl of Leicester's servants" erected the first public theatre in Blackfriars. It was the people itself that created its Stage. The theatre indeed was commonly only the courtyard of an inn, or a mere booth such as is still seen at a country fair. The bulk of the audience sate beneath the open sky in the "pit" or yard; a few covered seats in the galleries which ran round it formed the boxes of the wealthier spectators, while patrons and nobles found seats upon the actual boards. All the appliances were of the roughest sort: a few flowers served to indicate a garden, crowds and armies were represented by a dozen scene-shifters with swords and bucklers, heroes rode in and out on hobby-horses, and a scroll on a post told whether the scene was at Athens or London. There were no female actors, and the grossness which startles us in words which fell from women's lips took a different colour when every woman's part was acted by a boy. But difficulties such as these were more than compensated by the popular character of the drama itself. Rude as the theatre might be, all the world was there. The stage was crowded with nobles and courtiers. Apprentices and citizens thronged the benches in the yard below. The rough mob of the pit inspired, as it felt, the vigorous life, the rapid transitions, the passionate energy, the reality, the lifelike medley and confusion, the racy dialogue, the chat, the wit, the pathos, the sublimity, the rant and buffoonery, the coarse horrors and vulgar bloodshedding, the immense range over all classes of society, the intimacy with the foulest as well as the fairest developements of human temper, which characterized the English stage. The new drama represented "the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." The people itself brought its nobleness and its vileness to the boards. No stage was ever so human, no poetic life so intense. Wild, reckless,

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1588-1608.

defiant of all past tradition, of all conventional laws, the English dramatists owned no teacher, no source of poetic inspiration, but the people itself.

The early dramatists.

Few events in our literary history are so startling as this sudden rise of the Elizabethan drama. The first public theatre was erected only in the middle of the Queen's reign. Before the close of it eighteen theatres existed in London alone. Fifty dramatic poets, many of the first order, appeared in the fifty years which precede the closing of the theatres by the Puritans; and great as is the number of their works which have perished, we still possess a hundred dramas, all written within this period, and of which at least a half are excellent. A glance at their authors shows us that the intellectual quickening of the age had now reached the mass of the people. Almost all of the new playwrights were fairly educated, and many were university men. But instead of courtly singers of the Sidney and Spenser sort we see the advent of the "poor scholar." The earlier dramatists, such as Nash, Peele, Kyd, Greene, or Marlowe, were for the most part poor, and reckless in their poverty; wild livers, defiant of law or common fame, in revolt against the usages and religion of their day, "atheists" in general repute, "holding Moses for a juggler," haunting the brothel and the alehouse, and dying starved or in tavern brawls. But with their appearance began the Elizabethan drama. The few plays which have reached us of an earlier date are either cold imitations of the classical and Italian comedy, or rude farces like "Ralph Roister Doister," or tragedies such as "Gorbuduc" where, poetic as occasional passages may be, there is little promise of dramatic developement. But in the year which preceded the coming of the Armada the whole aspect of the stage suddenly changes, and the new dramatists range themselves around two men of very different genius, Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe.

Greene.

Of Greene, as the creator of our lighter English prose, we have already spoken. But his work as a poet was of

The England of Shakspere.
1593–1603.

yet greater importance, for his perception of character and the relations of social life, the playfulness of his fancy, and the liveliness of his style, exerted an influence on his contemporaries which was equalled by that of none but Marlowe and Peele. In spite of the rudeness of his plots and the unequal character of his work Greene must be regarded as the creator of our modern comedy. No figure better paints the group of young playwrights. He left Cambridge to travel through Italy and Spain, and to bring back the debauchery of the one and the scepticism of the other. In the words of remorse he wrote before his death he paints himself as a drunkard and a roysterer, winning money only by ceaseless pamphlets and plays to waste it on wine and women, and drinking the cup of life to the dregs. Hell and the after-world were the butts of his ceaseless mockery. If he had not feared the judges of the Queen's Courts more than he feared God, he said in bitter jest, he should often have turned cutpurse. He married, and loved his wife, but she was soon deserted; and the wretched profligate found himself again plunged into excesses which he loathed, though he could not live without them. But wild as was the life of Greene, his pen was pure. He is steadily on virtue's side in the love pamphlets and novelettes he poured out in endless succession, and whose plots were dramatized by the school which gathered round him.

Marlowe.

The life of Marlowe was as riotous, his scepticism even more daring, than the life and scepticism of Greene. His early death alone saved him in all probability from a prosecution for atheism. He was charged with calling Moses a juggler, and with boasting that, if he undertook to write a new religion, it should be a better religion than the Christianity he saw around him.* But he stood far ahead of his fellows as a creator of English tragedy. Born in 1564 at the opening of Elizabeth's reign, the son of a Canterbury shoemaker, but educated at Cambridge, Marlowe burst on the world in the year which preceded

CHAP. VII. — The England of Shakspere. — 1588-1603.

the triumph over the Armada with a play which at once wrought a revolution in the English stage. Bombastic and extravagant as it was, and extravagance reached its height in a scene where captive kings, the "pampered jades of Asia," drew their conqueror's car across the stage, "Tamburlaine" not only indicated the revolt of the new drama against the timid inanities of Euphuism, but gave an earnest of that imaginative daring, the secret of which Marlowe was to bequeath to the playwrights who followed him. He perished at thirty in a shameful brawl, but in his brief career he had struck the grander notes of the coming drama. His Jew of Malta was the herald of Shylock. He opened in "Edward the Second" the series of historical plays which gave us "Cæsar" and "Richard the Third." His "Faustus" is riotous, grotesque, and full of a mad thirst for pleasure, but it was the first dramatic attempt to touch the problem of the relations of man to the unseen world. Extravagant, unequal, stooping even to the ridiculous in his cumbrous and vulgar buffoonery, there is a force in Marlowe, a conscious grandeur of tone, a range of passion, which sets him above all his contemporaries save one. In the higher qualities of imagination, as in the majesty and sweetness of his "mighty line," he is inferior to Shakspere alone.

Shakspere.

A few daring jests, a brawl, and a fatal stab, make up the life of Marlowe; but even details such as these are wanting to the life of William Shakspere. Of hardly any great poet indeed do we know so little. For the story of his youth we have only one or two trifling legends, and these almost certainly false. Not a single letter or characteristic saying, not one of the jests "spoken at the Mermaid," hardly a single anecdote, remain to illustrate his busy life in London. His look and figure in later age have been preserved by the bust over his tomb at Stratford, and a hundred years after his death he was still remembered in his native town; but the minute diligence of the enquirers of the Georgian time was able to glean hardly a single

detail, even of the most trivial order, which could throw light upon the years of retirement before his death. It is owing perhaps to the harmony and unity of his temper that no salient peculiarity seems to have left its trace on the memory of his contemporaries; it is the very grandeur of his genius which precludes us from discovering any personal trait in his works. His supposed self-revelation in the Sonnets is so obscure that only a few outlines can be traced even by the boldest conjecture. In his dramas he is all his characters, and his characters range over all mankind. There is not one, or the act or word of one that we can identify personally with the poet himself.

His actor's life.

He was born in 1564, the sixth year of Elizabeth's reign, twelve years after the birth of Spenser, three years later than the birth of Bacon. Marlowe was of the same age with Shakspere: Greene probably a few years older. His father, a glover and small farmer of Stratford-on-Avon, was forced by poverty to lay down his office of alderman as his son reached boyhood; and stress of poverty may have been the cause which drove William Shakspere, who was already married at eighteen to a wife older than himself, to London and the stage. His life in the capital can hardly have begun later than in his twenty-third year, the memorable year which followed Sidney's death, which preceded the coming of the Armada, and which witnessed the production of Marlowe's "Tamburlaine." If we take the language of the Sonnets as a record of his personal feeling, his new profession as an actor stirred in him only the bitterness of self-contempt. He chides with Fortune "that did not better for my life provide than public means that public manners breed;" he writhes at the thought that he has "made himself a motley to the view" of the gaping apprentices in the pit of Blackfriars. "Thence comes it," he adds, "that my name receives a brand, and almost thence my nature is subdued to that it works in." But the application of the words is a more than doubtful one. In spite of petty squabbles with some of his dramatic

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

rivals at the outset of his career, the genial nature of the newcomer seems to have won him a general love among his fellows. In 1592, while still a mere actor and fitter of old plays for the stage, a fellow-playwright, Chettle, answered Greene's attack on him in words of honest affection: "Myself have seen his demeanour no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes: besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art." His partner Burbage spoke of him after death as a "worthy friend and fellow;" and Jonson handed down the general tradition of his time when he described him as "indeed honest, and of an open and free nature."

His early work.

His profession as an actor was at any rate of essential service to him in the poetic career which he soon undertook. Not only did it give him the sense of theatrical necessities which makes his plays so effective on the boards, but it enabled him to bring his pieces as he wrote them to the test of the stage. If there is any truth in Jonson's statement that Shakspere never blotted a line, there is no justice in the censure which it implies on his carelessness or incorrectness. The conditions of poetic publication were in fact wholly different from those of our own day. A drama remained for years in manuscript as an acting piece, subjec to continual revision and amendment; and every rehearsal and representation afforded hints for change which we know the young poet was far from neglecting. The chance which has preserved an earlier edition of his "Hamlet" shows in what an unsparing way Shakspere could recast even the finest products of his genius. Five years after the supposed date of his arrival in London he was already famous as a dramatist. Greene speaks bitterly of him under the name of "Shakescene" as an "upstart crow beautified with our feathers," a sneer which points either to his celebrity as an actor or to his preparation for loftier flights

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by fitting pieces of his predecessors for the stage. He was soon partner in the theatre, actor, and playwright; and another nickname, that of "Johannes Factotum" or Jack-of-all-Trades, shows his readiness to take all honest work which came to hand.

His first plays.

With his publication in 1593 of the poem of "Venus and Adonis," "the first heir of my invention" as Shakspere calls it, the period of independent creation fairly began. The date of its publication was a very memorable one. The "Faerie Queen" had appeared only three years before, and had placed Spenser without a rival at the head of English poetry. On the other hand the two leading dramatists of the time passed at this moment suddenly away. Greene died in poverty and self-reproach in the house of a poor shoemaker. "Doll," he wrote to the wife he had abandoned, "I charge thee, by the love of our youth and by my soul's rest, that thou wilt see this man paid; for if he and his wife had not succoured me I had died in the streets." "Oh, that a year were granted me to live," cried the young poet from his bed of death, "but I must die, of every man abhorred! Time, loosely spent, will not again be won! My time is loosely spent—and I undone!" A year later the death of Marlowe in a street brawl removed the only rival whose powers might have equalled Shakspere's own. He was now about thirty; and the twenty-three years which elapsed between the appearance of the "Adonis" and his death were filled with a series of masterpieces. Nothing is more characteristic of his genius than its incessant activity. Through the five years which followed the publication of his early poem he seems to have produced on an average two dramas a year. When we attempt however to trace the growth and progress of the poet's mind in the order of his plays we are met in the case of many of them by an absence of certain information as to the dates of their appearance. The facts on which enquiry has to build are extremely few. "Venus and Adonis," with the "Lucrece,"

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

must have been written before their publication in 1593-4; the Sonnets, though not published till 1609, were known in some form among his private friends as early as 1598. His earlier plays are defined by a list given in the "Wit's Treasury" of Francis Meres in 1598, though the omission of a play from a casual catalogue of this kind would hardly warrant us in assuming its necessary non-existence at the time. The works ascribed to him at his death are fixed in the same approximate fashion through the edition published by his fellow-actors. Beyond these meagre facts and our knowledge of the publication of a few of his dramas in his lifetime all is uncertain; and the conclusions which have been drawn from these, and from the dramas themselves, as well as from assumed resemblances with, or references to, other plays of the period can only be accepted as approximations to the truth.

His earlier comedies.

The bulk of his lighter comedies and historical dramas can be assigned with fair probability to a period from about 1593, when Shakspere was known as nothing more than an adapter, to 1598, when they are mentioned in the list of Meres. They bear on them indeed the stamp of youth. In "Love's Labour's Lost" the young playwright, fresh from his own Stratford, its "daisies pied and violets blue," with the gay bright music of its country ditties still in his ears, flings himself into the midst of the brilliant England which gathered round Elizabeth, busying himself as yet for the most part with the surface of it, with the humours and quixotisms, the wit and the whim, the unreality, the fantastic extravagance, which veiled its inner nobleness. Country-lad as he is, Shakspere shows himself master of it all; he can patter euphuism and exchange quip and repartee with the best; he is at home in their pedantries and affectations, their brag and their rhetoric, their passion for the fantastic and the marvellous. He can laugh as heartily at the romantic vagaries of the courtly world in which he finds himself as at the narrow dulness, the pompous triflings, of the country world which

he has left behind him. But he laughs frankly and without malice; he sees the real grandeur of soul which underlies all this quixotry and word-play; and owns with a smile that when brought face to face with the facts of human life, with the suffering of man or the danger of England, these fops have in them the stuff of heroes. He shares the delight in existence, the pleasure in sheer living, which was so marked a feature of the age; he enjoys the mistakes, the contrasts, the adventures, of the men about him; his fun breaks almost riotously out in the practical jokes of the "Taming of the Shrew" and the endless blunderings of the "Comedy of Errors." In these earlier efforts his work had been marked by little poetic elevation, or by passion. But the easy grace of the dialogue, the dexterous management of a complicated story, the genial gaiety of his tone, and the music of his verse promised a master of social comedy as soon as Shakspere turned from the superficial aspects of the world about him to find a new delight in the character and actions of men. The interest of human character was still fresh and vivid; the sense of individuality drew a charm from its novelty; and poet and essayist were busy alike in sketching the "humours" of mankind. Shakspere sketched with his fellows. In the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" his painting of manners was suffused by a tenderness and ideal beauty which formed an effective protest against the hard though vigorous character-painting which the first success of Ben Jonson in "Every Man in his Humour" brought at the time into fashion. But quick on these lighter comedies followed two in which his genius started fully into life. His poetic power, held in reserve till now, showed itself with a splendid profusion in the brilliant fancies of the "Midsummer Night's Dream;" and passion swept like a tide of resistless delight through "Romeo and Juliet."

CHAP. VII.

The England of Shakspere.

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Side by side however with these passionate dreams, these delicate imaginings and piquant sketches of manners, had been appearing during this short interval of intense

His historical plays.

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1598.

activity a series of dramas which mark Shakspere's relation to the new sense of patriotism, the more vivid sense of national existence, national freedom, national greatness, which gives its grandeur to the age of Elizabeth. England itself was now becoming a source of literary interest to poet and prose-writer. Warner in his "Albion's England," Daniel in his "Civil Wars," embalmed in verse the record of her past; Drayton in his "Polyolbion" sang the fairness of the land itself, the "tracts, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Britain." The national pride took its highest poetic form in the historical drama. No plays seem to have been more popular from the earliest hours of the new stage than dramatic representations of our history. Marlowe had shown in his "Edward the Second" what tragic grandeur could be reached in this favourite field; and, as we have seen, Shakspere had been led naturally towards it by his earlier occupation as an adapter of stock pieces like "Henry the Sixth" for the new requirements of the stage. He still to some extent followed in plan the older plays on the subjects he selected, but in his treatment of their themes he shook boldly off the yoke of the past. A larger and deeper conception of human character than any of the old dramatists had reached displayed itself in Richard the Third, in Falstaff, or in Hotspur; while in Constance and Richard the Second the pathos of human suffering was painted as even Marlowe had never dared to paint it.

His religious sympathies.

No dramas have done so much for Shakspere's enduring popularity with his countrymen as these historical plays. They have done more than all the works of English historians to nourish in the minds of Englishmen a love of and reverence for their country's past. When Chatham was asked where he had read his English history he answered, "In the plays of Shakspere." Nowhere could he have read it so well, for nowhere is the spirit of our history so nobly rendered. If the poet's work

echoes sometimes our national prejudice and unfairness of temper, it is instinct throughout with English humour, with our English love of hard fighting, our English faith in goodness and in the doom that waits upon triumphant evil, our English pity for the fallen. Shakspere is Elizabethan to the core. He stood at the meeting-point of two great epochs of our history. The age of the Renascence was passing into the age of Puritanism. Rifts which were still little were widening every hour, and threatening ruin to the fabric of Church and State which the Tudors had built up. A new political world was rising into being; a world healthier, more really national, but less picturesque, less wrapt in the mystery and splendour that poets love. Great as were the faults of Puritanism, it may fairly claim to be the first political system which recognized the grandeur of the people as a whole. As great a change was passing over the spiritual sympathies of men. A sterner Protestantism was invigorating and ennobling life by its morality, its seriousness, its intense conviction of God. But it was at the same time hardening and narrowing it. The Bible was superseding Plutarch. The "obstinate questionings" which haunted the finer souls of the Renascence were being stereotyped into the theological formulas of the Puritan. The sense of a divine omnipotence was annihilating man. The daring which turned England into a people of "adventurers," the sense of inexhaustible resources, the buoyant freshness of youth, the intoxicating sense of beauty and joy, which created Sidney and Marlowe and Drake, were passing away before the consciousness of evil and the craving to order man's life aright before God.

From this new world of thought and feeling Shakspere stood aloof. Turn as others might to the speculations of theology, man and man's nature remained with him an inexhaustible subject of interest. Caliban was among his latest creations. It is impossible to discover whether his religious belief was Catholic or Protestant. It is hard

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

indeed to say whether he had any religious belief or no. The religious phrases which are thinly scattered over his works are little more than expressions of a distant and imaginative reverence. But on the deeper grounds of religious faith his silence is significant. He is silent, and the doubt of Hamlet deepens his silence, about the after-world. "To die," it may be, was to him as it was to Claudio, "to go we know not whither." Often as his questionings turn to the riddle of life and death he leaves it a riddle to the last without heeding the common theological solutions around him. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

His political sympathies.

Nor were the political sympathies of the poet those of the coming time. His roll of dramas is the epic of civil war. The Wars of the Roses fill his mind, as they filled the mind of his contemporaries. It is not till we follow him through the series of plays from "Richard the Second" to "Henry the Eighth" that we realize how profoundly the memory of the struggle between York and Lancaster had moulded the temper of the people, how deep a dread of civil war, of baronial turbulence, of disputes over the succession to the throne, it had left behind it. Men had learned the horrors of the time from their fathers; they had drunk in with their childhood the lesson that such a chaos of weakness and misrule must never be risked again. From such a risk the Crown seemed the one security. With Shakspere as with his fellow-countrymen the Crown is still the centre and safeguard of the national life. His ideal England is an England grouped around a noble king, a king such as his own Henry the Fifth, devout, modest, simple as he is brave, but a lord in battle, a born ruler of men, with a loyal people about him and his enemies at his feet. Socially the poet reflects the aristocratic view of social life which was shared by all the nobler spirits of the Elizabethan time. Coriolanus is the embodiment of a great noble; and the taunts which Shakspere hurls in play after play at the rabble only echo the

CHAP. VII.

The England of Shakspere.

1593–1603.

general temper of the Renascence. But he shows no sympathy with the struggle of feudalism against the Crown. If he paints Hotspur with a fire which proves how thoroughly he could sympathize with the rough, bold temper of the baronage, he suffers him to fall unpitied before Henry the Fourth. Apart however from the strength and justice of its rule, royalty has no charm for him. He knows nothing of the "right divine of kings to govern wrong" which became the doctrine of prelates and courtiers in the age of the Stuarts. He shows in his "Richard the Second" the doom that waits on a lawless despotism, as he denounces in his "Richard the Third" the selfish and merciless ambition that severs a ruler from his people. But the dread of misrule was a dim and distant one. Shakspere had grown up under the reign of Elizabeth; he had known no ruler save one who had cast a spell over the hearts of Englishmen. His thoughts were absorbed, as those of the country were absorbed, in the struggle for national existence which centred round the Queen. "King John" is a trumpet-call to rally round Elizabeth in her fight for England. Again a Pope was asserting his right to depose an English sovereign and to loose Englishmen from their bond of allegiance. Again political ambitions and civil discord woke at the call of religious war. Again a foreign power was threatening England at the summons of Rome, and hoping to master her with the aid of revolted Englishmen. The heat of such a struggle as this left no time for the thought of civil liberties. Shakspere casts aside the thought of the Charter to fix himself on the strife of the stranger for England itself. What he sang was the duty of patriotism, the grandeur of loyalty, the freedom of England from Pope or Spaniard, its safety within its "water-walled bulwark," if only its national union was secure. And now that the nation was at one, now that he had seen in his first years of London life Catholics as well as Protestants trooping to the muster at Tilbury and hasting down Thames to the fight in the

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1598–1603.

Channel, he could thrill his hearers with the proud words that sum up the work of Elizabeth:—

"This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now that her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them! Nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true."

Shakspere's prosperity.

With this great series of historical and social dramas Shakspere had passed far beyond his fellows whether as a tragedian or as a writer of comedy. "The Muses," said Meres in 1598, "would speak with Shakspere's fine-filed phrase, if they would speak English." His personal popularity was now at its height. His pleasant temper and the vivacity of his wit had drawn him early into contact with the young Earl of Southampton, to whom his "Adonis" and "Lucrece" are dedicated; and the different tone of the two dedications shows how rapidly acquaintance ripened into an ardent friendship. Shakspere's wealth and influence too were growing fast. He had property both in Stratford and London, and his fellow-townsmen made him their suitor to Lord Burleigh for favours to be bestowed on Stratford. He was rich enough to aid his father, and to buy the house at Stratford which afterwards became his home. The tradition that Elizabeth was so pleased with Falstaff in "Henry the Fourth" that she ordered the poet to show her Falstaff in love—an order which produced the "Merry Wives of Windsor"—whether true or false, proves his repute as a playwright. As the group of earlier poets passed away, they found successors in Marston, Dekker, Middleton, Heywood, and Chapman, and above all in Ben Jonson. But none of these could dispute the supremacy of Shakspere. The verdict of Meres that "Shakspere among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage," represented the general feeling of his contemporaries. He was at last fully master of the resources of his art. The

"Merchant of Venice" marks the perfection of his developement as a dramatist in the completeness of its stage effect, the ingenuity of its incidents, the ease of its movement, the beauty of its higher passages, the reserve and self-control with which its poetry is used, the conception and unfolding of character, and above all the mastery with which character and event is grouped round the figure of Shylock. Master as he is of his art, the poet's temper is still young; the "Merry Wives of Windsor" is a burst of gay laughter; and laughter more tempered, yet full of a sweeter fascination, rings round us in "As You Like It"

His gloom.

But in the melancholy and meditative Jaques of the last drama we feel the touch of a new and graver mood. Youth, so full and buoyant in the poet till now, seems to have passed almost suddenly away. Though Shakspere had hardly reached forty, in one of his Sonnets which cannot have been written at a much later time than this there are indications that he already felt the advance of premature age. And at this moment the outer world suddenly darkened around him. The brilliant circle of young nobles whose friendship he had shared was broken up in 1601 by the political storm which burst in a mad struggle of the Earl of Essex for power. Essex himself fell on the scaffold; his friend and Shakspere's idol, Southampton, passed a prisoner into the Tower; Herbert Lord Pembroke, a younger patron of the poet, was banished from the Court. While friends were thus falling and hopes fading without, Shakspere's own mind seems to have been going through a phase of bitter suffering and unrest. In spite of the ingenuity of commentators, it is difficult and even impossible to derive any knowledge of Shakspere's inner history from the Sonnets; "the strange imagery of passion which passes over the magic mirror," it has been finely said, "has no tangible evidence before or behind it." But its mere passing is itself an evidence of the restlessness and agony within. The change in

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

the character of his dramas gives a surer indication of his change of mood. The fresh joyousness, the keen delight in life and in man, which breathes through Shakspere's early work disappears in comedies such as "Troilus" and "Measure for Measure." Disappointment, disillusion, a new sense of the evil and foulness that underlies so much of human life, a loss of the old frank trust in its beauty and goodness, threw their gloom over these comedies. Failure seems everywhere. In "Julius Cæsar" the virtue of Brutus is foiled by its ignorance of and isolation from mankind; in Hamlet even penetrating intellect proves helpless for want of the capacity of action; the poison of Iago taints the love of Desdemona and the grandeur of Othello; Lear's mighty passion battles helplessly against the wind and the rain; a woman's weakness of frame dashes the cup of her triumph from the hand of Lady Macbeth; lust and self-indulgence blast the heroism of Antony, pride ruins the nobleness of Coriolanus.

His passion plays.

But the very struggle and self-introspection that these dramas betray were to give a depth and grandeur to Shakspere's work such as it had never known before. The age was one in which man's temper and powers took a new range and energy. Sidney or Raleigh lived not one but a dozen lives at once; the daring of the adventurer, the philosophy of the scholar, the passion of the lover, the fanaticism of the saint, towered into almost superhuman grandeur. Man became conscious of the immense resources that lay within him, conscious of boundless powers that seemed to mock the narrow world in which they moved. All through the age of the Renascence one feels this impress of the gigantic, this giant-like activity, this immense ambition and desire. The very bombast and extravagance of the times reveal cravings and impulses before which common speech broke down. It is this grandeur of humanity that finds its poetic expression in the later work of Shakspere. As the poet penetrated deeper and deeper into the recesses of the soul, he saw how

great and wondrous a thing was man. "What a piece of work is a man," cries Hamlet; "how noble in reason; how infinite in faculty; in form and moving how express and admirable; in action how like an angel; in apprehension how like a god; the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals!" It is the wonder of man that spreads before us as the poet pictures the wide speculation of Hamlet, the awful convulsion of a great nature in Othello, the terrible storm in the soul of Lear which blends with the very storm of the heavens themselves, the awful ambition that nerved a woman's hand to dabble itself with the blood of a murdered king, the reckless lust that "flung away a world for love." Amid the terror and awe of these great dramas we learn something of the vast forces of the age from which they sprang. The passion of Mary Stuart, the ruthlessness of Alva, the daring of Drake, the chivalry of Sydney, the range of thought and action in Raleigh or Elizabeth, come better home to us as we follow the mighty series of tragedies which began in "Hamlet" and ended in "Coriolanus."

The England of Shakspere. [illegible]

Bacon.

Shakspere's last dramas, the three exquisite works in which he shows a soul at rest with itself and with the world, "Cymbeline," "The Tempest," "Winter's Tale," were written in the midst of ease and competence, in a house at Stratford to which he withdrew a few years after the death of Elizabeth. In them we lose all relation with the world or the time and pass into a region of pure poetry. It is in this peaceful and gracious close that the life of Shakspere contrasts most vividly with that of his greatest contemporary. If the imaginative resources of the new England were seen in the creators of Hamlet and the Faerie Queen, its purely intellectual capacity, its vast command over the stores of human knowledge, the amazing sense of its own powers with which it dealt with them, were seen in the work of Francis Bacon. Bacon was born in 1561, three years before the birth of Shakspere. He was the younger son of a Lord Keeper,

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

as well as the nephew of Lord Burleigh, and even in childhood his quickness and sagacity won the favour of the Queen. Elizabeth "delighted much to confer with him, and to prove him with questions: unto which he delivered himself with that gravity and maturity above his years that her Majesty would often term him 'the young Lord Keeper.'" Even as a boy at college he expressed his dislike of the Aristotelian philosophy, as "a philosophy only strong for disputations and contentions but barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." As a law student of twenty-one he sketched in a tract on the "Greatest Birth of Time" the system of inductive enquiry which he was already prepared to substitute for it. The speculations of the young thinker however were interrupted by his hopes of Court success. But these were soon dashed to the ground. He was left poor by his father's death; the ill-will of the Cecils barred his advancement with the Queen: and a few years before Shakspere's arrival in London Bacon entered as a barrister at Gray's Inn. He soon became one of the most successful lawyers of the time. At twenty-three Bacon was a member of the House of Commons, and his judgement and eloquence at once brought him to the front. "The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end," Ben Jonson tells us. The steady growth of his reputation was quickened in 1597 by the appearance of his "Essays," a work remarkable, not merely for the condensation of its thought and its felicity and exactness of expression, but for the power with which it applied to human life that experimental analysis which Bacon was at a later time to make the key of Science.

His fame at once became great at home and abroad, but with this nobler fame Bacon could not content himself. He was conscious of great powers as well as great aims for the public good: and it was a time when such aims could hardly be realized save through the means of the Crown. But political employment seemed farther off

than ever. At the outset of his career in Parliament he irritated Elizabeth by a firm opposition to her demand of a subsidy; and though the offence was atoned for by profuse apologies and by the cessation of all further resistance to the policy of the Court, the law offices of the Crown were more than once refused to him, and it was only after the publication of his "Essays" that he could obtain some slight promotion as a Queen's Counsel. The moral weakness which more and more disclosed itself is the best justification of the Queen in her reluctance—a reluctance so greatly in contrast with her ordinary course—to bring the wisest head in her realm to her Council-board. The men whom Elizabeth employed were for the most part men whose intellect was directed by a strong sense of public duty. Their reverence for the Queen, strangely exaggerated as it may seem to us, was guided and controlled by an ardent patriotism and an earnest sense of religion; and with all their regard for the royal prerogative, they never lost their regard for the law. The grandeur and originality of Bacon's intellect parted him from men like these quite as much as the bluntness of his moral perceptions. In politics, as in science, he had little reverence for the past. Law, constitutional privileges, or religion, were to him simply means of bringing about certain ends of good government; and if these ends could be brought about in shorter fashion he saw only pedantry in insisting on more cumbrous means. He had great social and political ideas to realize, the reform and codification of the law, the civilization of Ireland, the purification of the Church, the union—at a later time—of Scotland and England, educational projects, projects of material improvement, and the like; and the direct and shortest way of realizing these ends was, in Bacon's eyes, the use of the power of the Crown. But whatever charm such a conception of the royal power might have for her successor, it had little charm for Elizabeth; and to the end of her reign Bacon was foiled in his efforts to rise in her service.

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603. *The Novum Organum.*

Political activity however and court intrigue left room in his mind for the philosophical speculation which had begun with his earliest years. Amidst debates in parliament and flatteries in the closet Bacon had been silently framing a new philosophy. It made its first decisive appearance after the final disappointment of his hopes from Elizabeth in the publication of the "Advancement of Learning." The close of this work was, in his own words, "a general and faithful perambulation of learning, with an enquiry what parts thereof lie fresh and waste and not improved and converted by the industry of man; to the end that such a plot, made and recorded to memory, may both minister light to any public designation and also serve to excite voluntary endeavours." It was only by such a survey, he held, that men could be turned from useless studies, or ineffectual means of pursuing more useful ones, and directed to the true end of knowledge as "a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate." The work was in fact the preface to a series of treatises which were intended to be built up into an "Instauratio Magna," which its author was never destined to complete, and of which the parts that we possess were published in the following reign. The "Cogitata et Visa" was a first sketch of the "Novum Organum," which in its complete form was presented to James in 1621. A year later Bacon produced his "Natural and Experimental History." This, with the "Novum Organum" and the "Advancement of Learning," was all of his projected "Instauratio Magna" which he actually finished; and even of this portion we have only part of the last two divisions. The "Ladder of the Understanding," which was to have followed these and led up from experience to science, the "Anticipations," or provisional hypotheses for the enquiries of the new philosophy, and the closing account of "Science in Practice" were left for posterity to bring to completion. "We may, as we trust,"

said Bacon, "make no despicable beginnings. The destinies of the human race must complete it, in such a manner perhaps as men looking only at the present world would not readily conceive. For upon this will depend, not only a speculative good, but all the fortunes of mankind, and all their power."

When we turn from words like these to the actual work which Bacon did, it is hard not to feel a certain disappointment. He did not thoroughly understand the older philosophy which he attacked. His revolt from the waste of human intelligence which he conceived to be owing to the adoption of a false method of investigation blinded him to the real value of deduction as an instrument of discovery; and he was encouraged in his contempt for it as much by his own ignorance of mathematics as by the non-existence in his day of the great deductive sciences of physics and astronomy Nor had he a more accurate prevision of the method of modern science. The inductive process to which he exclusively directed men's attention bore no fruit in Bacon's hands. The "art of investigating nature" on which he prided himself has proved useless for scientific purposes, and would be rejected by modern investigators. Where he was on a more correct track he can hardly be regarded as original. "It may be doubted," says Dugald Stewart, "whether any one important rule with regard to the true method of investigation be contained in his works of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors." Not only indeed did Bacon fail to anticipate the methods of modern science, but he even rejected the great scientific discoveries of his own day. He set aside with the same scorn the astronomical theory of Copernicus and the magnetic investigations of Gilbert. The contempt seems to have been fully returned by the scientific workers of his day. "The Lord Chancellor wrote on science," said Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, "like a Lord Chancellor."

In spite however of his inadequate appreciation either of the old philosophy or the new, the almost unanimous voice of later ages has attributed, and justly attributed, to the "Novum Organum" a decisive influence on the developement of modern science. If he failed in revealing the method of experimental research, Bacon was the first to proclaim the existence of a Philosophy of Science, to insist on the unity of knowledge and enquiry throughout the physical world, to give dignity by the large and noble temper in which he treated them to the petty details of experiment in which science had to begin, to clear a way for it by setting scornfully aside the traditions of the past, to claim for it its true rank and value, and to point to the enormous results which its culture would bring in increasing the power and happiness of mankind. In one respect his attitude was in the highest degree significant. The age in which he lived was one in which theology was absorbing the intellectual energy of the world. He was the servant too of a king with whom theological studies superseded all others. But if he bowed in all else to James, Bacon would not, like Casaubon, bow in this. He would not even, like Descartes, attempt to transform theology by turning reason into a mode of theological demonstration. He stood absolutely aloof from it. Though as a politician he did not shrink from dealing with such subjects as Church Reform, he dealt with them simply as matters of civil polity. But from his exhaustive enumeration of the branches of human knowledge he excluded theology, and theology alone. His method was of itself inapplicable to a subject where the premisses were assumed to be certain, and the results known. His aim was to seek for unknown results by simple experiment. It was against received authority and accepted tradition in matters of enquiry that his whole system protested; what he urged was the need of making belief rest strictly on proof, and proof rest on the conclusions drawn from evidence by reason. But in theology—all theologians asserted—reason played but a subordinate part. "If I

proceed to treat of it," said Bacon, "I shall step out of the bark of human reason, and enter into the ship of the Church. Neither will the stars of philosophy, which have hitherto so nobly shone on us, any longer give us their light."

The certainty indeed of conclusions on such subjects was out of harmony with the grandest feature of Bacon's work, his noble confession of the liability of every enquirer to error. It was his especial task to warn men against the "vain shows" of knowledge which had so long hindered any real advance in it, the "idols" of the Tribe, the Den, the Forum, and the Theatre, the errors which spring from the systematizing spirit which pervades all masses of men, or from individual idiosyncracies, or from the strange power of words and phrases over the mind, or from the traditions of the past. Nor were the claims of theology easily to be reconciled with the position which he was resolute to assign to natural science. "Through all those ages," Bacon says, "wherein men of genius or learning principally or even moderately flourished, the smallest part of human industry has been spent on natural philosophy, though this ought to be esteemed as the great mother of the sciences; for all the rest, if torn from this root, may perhaps be polished and formed for use, but can receive little increase." It was by the adoption of the method of inductive enquiry which physical science was to make its own, and by basing enquiry on grounds which physical science could supply, that the moral sciences, ethics and politics, could alone make any real advance. "Let none expect any great promotion of the sciences, especially in their effective part, unless natural philosophy be drawn out to particular sciences; and, again, unless these particular sciences be brought back again to natural philosophy. From this defect it is that astronomy, optics, music, many mechanical arts, and (what seems stranger) even moral and civil philosophy and logic rise but little above the foundations, and only skim over the varieties

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

and surfaces of things." It was this lofty conception of the position and destiny of natural science which Bacon was the first to impress upon mankind at large. The age was one in which knowledge was passing to fields of enquiry which had till then been unknown, in which Kepler and Galileo were creating modern astronomy, in which Descartes was revealing the laws of motion, and Harvey the circulation of the blood. But to the mass of men this great change was all but imperceptible; and it was the energy, the profound conviction, the eloquence of Bacon which first called the attention of mankind as a whole to the power and importance of physical research. It was he who by his lofty faith in the results and victories of the new philosophy nerved its followers to a zeal and confidence equal to his own. It was he above all who gave dignity to the slow and patient processes of investigation, of experiment, of comparison, to the sacrifice of hypothesis to fact, to the single aim after truth, which was to be the law of modern science.

Advance of the Parliament.

While England thus became "a nest of singing birds," while Bacon was raising the lofty fabric of his philosophical speculation, the people itself was waking to a new sense of national freedom. Elizabeth saw the forces, political and religious, which she had stubbornly held in check for half a century pressing on her irresistibly. In spite of the rarity of its assemblings, in spite of high words and imprisonment and dexterous management, the Parliament had quietly gained a power which, at her accession, the Queen could never have dreamed of its possessing. Step by step the Lower House had won the freedom of its members from arrest save by its own permission, the right of punishing and expelling members for crimes committed within its walls, and of determining all matters relating to elections. The more important claim of freedom of speech had brought on from time to time a series of petty conflicts in which Elizabeth generally gave way. But on this point the Commons still shrank from any consistent

repudiation of the Queen's assumption of control. A bold protest of Peter Wentworth against her claim to exercize such a control in 1575 was met indeed by the House itself with his committal to the Tower; and the bolder questions which he addressed to the Parliament of 1588, "Whether this Council is not a place for every member of the same freely and without control, by bill or speech, to utter any of the griefs of the Commonwealth," brought on him a fresh imprisonment at the hands of the Council, which lasted till the dissolution of the Parliament and with which the Commons declined to interfere. But while vacillating in its assertion of the rights of individual members, the House steadily claimed for itself a right to discuss even the highest matters of State. Three great subjects, the succession, the Church, and the regulation of trade, had been regarded by every Tudor sovereign as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. But Parliament had again and again asserted its right to consider the succession. It persisted in spite of censure and rebuff in presenting schemes of ecclesiastical reform. And three years before Elizabeth's death it dealt boldly with matters of trade. Complaints made in 1571 of the licences and monopolies by which internal and external commerce were fettered were repressed by a royal reprimand as matters neither pertaining to the Commons nor within the compass of their understanding. When the subject was again stirred nearly twenty years afterwards, Sir Edward Hoby was sharply rebuked by "a great personage" for his complaint of the illegal exactions made by the Exchequer. But the bill which he promoted was sent up to the Lords in spite of this, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the storm of popular indignation which had been roused by the growing grievance nerved the Commons, in 1601, to a decisive struggle. It was in vain that the ministers opposed a bill for the Abolition of Monopolies, and after four days of vehement debate the tact of Elizabeth taught her to give way. She acted with her usual ability, declared her

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

previous ignorance of the existence of the evil, thanked the House for its interference, and quashed at a single blow every monopoly that she had granted.

Growth of Puritanism.

Dexterous as was Elizabeth's retreat, the defeat was none the less a real one. Political freedom was proving itself again the master in the long struggle with the Crown. Nor in her yet fiercer struggle against religious freedom could Elizabeth look forward to any greater success. The sharp suppression of the Martin Mar-prelate pamphlets was far from damping the courage of the Presbyterians. Cartwright, who had been appointed by Lord Leicester to the mastership of an hospital at Warwick, was bold enough to organize his system of Church discipline among the clergy of that county and of Northamptonshire. His example was widely followed; and the general gatherings of the whole ministerial body of the clergy and the smaller assemblies for each diocese or shire, which in the Presbyterian scheme bore the name of Synods and Classes, began to be held in many parts of England for the purposes of debate and consultation. The new organization was quickly suppressed, but Cartwright was saved from the banishment which Whitgift demanded by a promise of submission, and his influence steadily widened. With Presbyterianism itself indeed Elizabeth was strong enough to deal. Its dogmatism and bigotry was opposed to the better temper of the age, and it never took any popular hold on England. But if Presbyterianism was limited to a few, Puritanism, the religious temper which sprang from a deep conviction of the truth of Protestant doctrines and of the falsehood of Catholicism, had become through the struggle with Spain and the Papacy the temper of three-fourths of the English people. Unluckily the policy of Elizabeth did its best to give to the Presbyterians the support of Puritanism. Her establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission had given fresh life and popularity to the doctrines which it aimed at crushing by drawing together

two currents of opinion which were in themselves perfectly distinct. The Presbyterian platform of Church discipline had as yet been embraced by the clergy only, and by few among the clergy. On the other hand, the wish for a reform in the Liturgy, the dislike of "superstitious usages," of the use of the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism, the gift of the ring in marriage, the posture of kneeling at the Lord's Supper, was shared by a large number of the clergy and the laity alike. At the opening of Elizabeth's reign almost all the higher Churchmen save Parker were opposed to them, and a motion for their abolition in Convocation was lost but by a single vote. The temper of the country gentlemen on this subject was indicated by that of Parliament; and it was well known that the wisest of the Queen's Councillors, Burleigh, Walsingham, and Knollys, were at one time in this matter with the gentry. If their common persecution did not wholly succeed in fusing these two sections of religious opinion into one, it at any rate gained for the Presbyterians a general sympathy on the part of the Puritans, which raised them from a clerical clique into a popular party.

Philip and Ireland

But if Elizabeth's task became more difficult at home, the last years of her reign were years of splendour and triumph abroad. The overthrow of Philip's hopes in France had been made more bitter by the final overthrow of his hopes at sea. In 1596 his threat of a fresh Armada was met by the daring descent of an English force upon Cadiz. The town was plundered and burned to the ground; thirteen vessels of war were fired in its harbour, and the stores accumulated for the expedition utterly destroyed. In spite of this crushing blow a Spanish fleet gathered in the following year and set sail for the English coast; but as in the case of its predecessor storms proved more fatal than the English guns, and the ships were wrecked and almost destroyed in the Bay of Biscay. Meanwhile whatever hopes remained of subjecting the Low Countries were destroyed by the triumph of Henry of Navarre. A

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593–1603.

triple league of France, England, and the Netherlands left Elizabeth secure to the eastward; and the only quarter in which Philip could now strike a blow at her was the great dependency of England in the west. Since the failure of the Spanish force at Smerwick the power of the English government had been recognized everywhere throughout Ireland. But it was a power founded solely on terror, and the outrages and exactions of the soldiery who had been flushed with rapine and bloodshed in the south sowed during the years which followed the reduction of Munster the seeds of a revolt more formidable than any which Elizabeth had yet encountered. The tribes of Ulster, divided by the policy of Sidney, were again united by a common hatred of their oppressors; and in Hugh O'Neill they found a leader of even greater ability than Shane himself. Hugh had been brought up at the English court and was in manners and bearing an Englishman. He had been rewarded for his steady loyalty in previous contests by a grant of the earldom of Tyrone, and in his contest with a rival chieftain of his clan he had secured aid from the government by an offer to introduce the English laws and shire-system into his new country. But he was no sooner undisputed master of the north than his tone gradually changed. Whether from a long-formed plan, or from suspicion of English designs upon himself, he at last took a position of open defiance.

Revolt of Ulster.

It was at the moment when the Treaty of Vervins and the wreck of the second Armada freed Elizabeth's hands from the struggle with Spain that the revolt under Hugh O'Neill broke the quiet which had prevailed since the victories of Lord Grey. The Irish question again became the chief trouble of the Queen. The tide of her recent triumphs seemed at first to have turned. A defeat of the English forces in Tyrone caused a general rising of the northern tribes, and a great effort made in 1599 for the suppression of the growing revolt failed through the vanity

and disobedience, if not the treacherous complicity, of the Queen's lieutenant, the young Earl of Essex. His successor, Lord Mountjoy, found himself master on his arrival of only a few miles round Dublin. But in three years the revolt was at an end. A Spanish force which landed to support it at Kinsale was driven to surrender; a line of forts secured the country as the English mastered it; all open opposition was crushed out by the energy and the ruthlessness of the new Lieutenant; and a famine which followed on his ravages completed the devastating work of the sword. Hugh O'Neill was brought in triumph to Dublin; the Earl of Desmond, who had again roused Munster into revolt, fled for refuge to Spain; and the work of conquest was at last brought to a close.

The last years of Elizabeth.

The triumph of Mountjoy flung its lustre over the last days of Elizabeth, but no outer triumph could break the gloom which gathered round the dying Queen. Lonely as she had always been, her loneliness deepened as she drew towards the grave. The statesmen and warriors of her earlier days had dropped one by one from her Council-board. Leicester had died in the year of the Armada; two years later Walsingham followed him to the grave; in 1598 Burleigh himself passed away. Their successors were watching her last moments, and intriguing for favour in the coming reign. Her favourite, Lord Essex, not only courted favour with James of Scotland, but brought him to suspect Robert Cecil, who had succeeded his father at the Queen's Council-board, of designs against his succession. The rivalry between the two ministers hurried Essex into fatal projects which led to his failure in Ireland and to an insane outbreak of revolt which brought him in 1601 to the block. But Cecil had no sooner proved the victor in this struggle at court than he himself entered into a secret correspondence with the King of Scots. His action was wise: it brought James again into friendly relations with the Queen; and paved the way for a peaceful transfer of the crown. But hidden as this correspondence

CHAP VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593–1603.

was from Elizabeth, the suspicion of it only added to her distrust. The troubles of the war in Ireland brought fresh cares to the aged Queen. It drained her treasury. The old splendour of her Court waned and disappeared. Only officials remained about her, "the other of the Council and nobility estrange themselves by all occasions." The love and reverence of the people itself lessened as they felt the pressure and taxation of the war. Of old men had pressed to see the Queen as if it were a glimpse of heaven. "In the year 1588," a bishop tells us, who was then a country boy fresh come to town, "I did live at the upper end of the Strand near St. Clement's church, when suddenly there came a report to us, (it was in December, much about five of the clock at night, very dark) that the Queen was gone to Council, 'and if you will see the Queen you must come quickly' Then we all ran, when the Court gates were set open, and no man did hinder us from coming in. There we came, where there was a far greater company than was usually at Lenten sermons; and when we had staid there an hour and that the yard was full, there being a number of torches, the Queen came out in great state. Then we cried 'God save your Majesty' God save your Majesty!' Then the Queen turned to us and said 'God bless you all, my good people!' Then we cried again 'God bless your Majesty' God bless your Majesty!' Then the Queen said again to us, 'You may well have a greater prince, but you shall never have a more loving prince.' And so looking one upon another a while the Queen departed. This wrought such an impression on us, for shows and pageantry are ever best seen by torchlight, that all the way long we did nothing but talk what an admirable Queen she was, and how we would adventure our lives to do her service." But now, as Elizabeth passed along in her progresses, the people whose applause she courted remained cold and silent The temper of the age in fact was changing, and isolating her as it changed. Her own England, the England which had grown up around her,

serious, moral, prosaic, shrank coldly from this brilliant, fanciful, unscrupulous, child of earth and the Renascence.

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1593-1603.

Elizabeth's death.

But if ministers and courtiers were counting on her death, Elizabeth had no mind to die. She had enjoyed life as the men of her day enjoyed it, and now that they were gone she clung to it with a fierce tenacity. She hunted, she danced, she jested with her young favourites, she coquetted and scolded and frolicked at sixty-seven as she had done at thirty. "The Queen," wrote a courtier a few months before her death, "was never so gallant these many years nor so set upon jollity." She persisted, in spite of opposition, in her gorgeous progresses from country-house to country-house. She clung to business as of old, and rated in her usual fashion "one who minded not to giving up some matter of account" But death crept on. Her face became haggard, and her frame shrank almost to a skeleton. At last her taste for finery disappeared, and she refused to change her dresses for a week together. A strange melancholy settled down on her. "She held in her hand," says one who saw her in her last days, "a golden cup, which she often put to her lips: but in truth her heart seemed too full to need more filling." Gradually her mind gave way She lost her memory, the violence of her temper became unbearable, her very courage seemed to forsake her. She called for a sword to lie constantly beside her and thrust it from time to time through the arras, as if she heard murderers stirring there. Food and rest became alike distasteful She sate day and night propped up with pillows on a stool, her finger on her lip, her eyes fixed on the floor, without a word. If she once broke the silence, it was with a flash of her old queenliness When Robert Cecil declared that she "must" go to bed the word roused her like a trumpet "Must!" she exclaimed; "is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man! thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word." Then, as her anger spent itself, she sank into her old dejection. "Thou art so

CHAP. VII. The England of Shakspere. 1598-1603.

presumptuous," she said, "because thou knowest I shall die.' She rallied once more when the ministers beside her bed named Lord Beauchamp, the heir to the Suffolk claim, as a possible successor. "I will have no rogue's son," she cried hoarsely, "in my seat." But she gave no sign, save a motion of the head, at the mention of the King of Scots. She was in fact fast becoming insensible; and early the next morning, on the twenty-fourth of March, 1603, the life of Elizabeth, a life so great, so strange and lonely in its greatness, ebbed quietly away.

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